Is Beauty Only Sin Deep?

NATIONAL REVIEW

WILL BROADWAY BUST?

JUN 24

THEY HAD A RIGHT TO SING THE BLUES

Tom Bethell

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Charles Murray, George Gilder, Irwin Stelzer, Jude Wanniski, and Norman Macrae

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MEMORY AND METAPHOR

Romare Bearden's great legacy to American art and culture is fully explored in his most definitive retrospective to date. It moves from his early experimental styles to the brilliant collages that became

THE ART OF ROMARE BEARDEN 1940–1987

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The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, April 14 – August 11, 1991

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, September 28 – November 10, 1991

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High Museum of Art, Atlanta, February 25 – May 3, 1992

The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, May 30 – July 26, 1992

National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C., October 2, 1992 – January 3, 1993

The exhibition is organized by The Studio Museum in Harlem

She-Ra, 1970 Collage on board Wadsworth Athen

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NATIONAL REVIEW

JULY 8, 1991 VOL. XLIII, NO. 12

Cover Story

31 ***They Had a Right to Sing the Blues***
The genius of American culture has long been popular music—blues, ragtime, jazz. But can the nation take credit for the achievements of blacks or any other group, especially since the music starts losing its vitality as soon as it achieves commercial success? **Tom Bethell** considers the relationship between suffering, local culture, the market, and creativity.

Articles

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With U.S. troops leaving, the Kurds expect another bloodbath. **Donald Kirk** reports from the occupied zone. . . . President Bush's choice of Robert Strauss as ambassador to the Kremlin has confused apparatchiks from Moscow to Washington, notes **William McGurn**. . . . Australia has finally abandoned protectionism, but **Gerard Henderson** points out that the man responsible for the change has just resigned.

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From the collapse of Communism to the failure of the welfare state, conservatives have proved fine prophets. But what is next? We asked five conservative thinkers—**Irwin M. Stelzer**, **George Gilder**, **Norman Macrae**, **Jude Wanniski**, and **Charles Murray**—what will and should happen in the years to come.

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What do you call it when the other side starts cheating the day after a treaty is signed? Arms control, sighs **Frank J. Gaffney Jr.**

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Does the American Bar Association represent the Bar or the Left? **Robert Stowe England** looks at the battle to depoliticize the ABA.

37 ***Abortion, Judaism, and Jews***
Jews may disagree, **Don Feder** argues, but Jewish *law* is clear.

Books, Arts & Manners

40 How can evidently intelligent men of the Left believe so many ridiculous things? Searching for clues in *Deterring Democracy*, Noam Chomsky's revision of recent U.S. history, **Matthew Scully** finds only the determination of the conspiracy theorist. . . . David Walsh's remarkable meditation on the philosophical path from modernism to the abyss and on to God includes the best reading of Nietzsche **Chilton Williamson Jr.** has yet seen. . . . Is "the beauty myth" simply a masculine tool of oppression? **Mary G. Gotschall** instructs Naomi Wolf on the difference between nature and nurture. . . . **Ralph de Toledano** muses on the words we share with Dr. Johnson. . . . Artistic excellence is the least concern of the Tony Awards, notes **Eva Resnikova**: with straight drama on its deathbed, life support is all Broadway can ask. . . . The ladies Thelma and Louise are supposedly models of feminist liberation; **John Simon** finds that good intentions make poor pavement in road *films* too.

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Cover photo by Tom Bethell

The Audit Bureau

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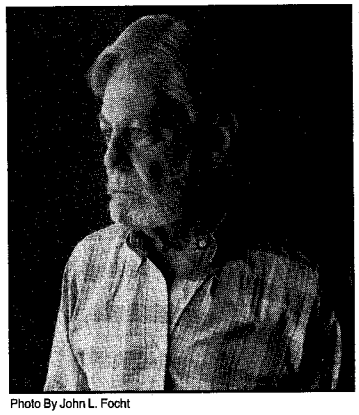

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LETTERS

Useless but Just

You cite compelling evidence to suggest that gun ownership by law-abiding citizens does not increase crime ["The Week," June 10]. However, it simply does not follow from your arguments that "broadly based gun control is the unilateral disarmament of the law-abiding." If I understand the Brady Bill correctly, at the end of the seven-day waiting period, the law-abiding citizen *gets his gun*. How is this disarmament?

I would point out that in the interest of civility we accept certain, albeit narrow, limits on our constitutionally guaranteed rights. For example, many of us agree that the First Amendment does not guarantee our right to scream "Fire!" in a crowded theater. A waiting period ultimately does not deny anybody his constitutionally guaranteed right to bear arms, it merely allows time to weed out the crackpots (and crack-dealers) who, for the common good, should not be permitted to own guns. Indeed, as you mention in your editorial, "increased gun availability for the identifiably violence-prone *does* lead to an increase in crime."

Having said this, I must align myself with critics of the Brady Bill who argue that the waiting period will not stop criminals from stealing guns or from obtaining them on the black market. For this reason a useful addendum to the Brady Bill would be a provision bolstering law-enforcement efforts to interdict these activities.

Robert P. Lindeman
New York, N.Y.

Left to Rest

I read with interest Clement Meighan's article, "Bury My Bones at Wounded Knee" [May 27]. It is beyond argument that, as Professor Meighan amply illustrates, this subject has become drearily overburdened with bureaucratic nonsense. As an attorney who occasionally represents land developers, I have seen this first-hand.

But this is not to say that American Indians themselves (as opposed to Jerry Brown et al. and the various commissions they have spawned) do not have a very legitimate claim that their ancestors' burial grounds should be respected (i.e., left alone). It is one thing to stop a project in its tracks because of a turned-up bone fragment or potsherd; it is quite another to say that we should not deliberately unearth human remains to satisfy public curiosity, particularly when those remains are of deep religious significance. The American Indian belief that the lands where their ancestors are buried are sacred lands is not part of "a new view of ancient history . . . put forward by activists and Indian politicians" in the 1960s. It is centuries old and on the face of it deserves the same respect as, for example, the right of Christians to keep their consecrated cemeteries undisturbed.

Barry M. Johnston
Long Valley, N.J.

Birds of a Feather

In a recent editorial, you contrast "moderate" Jordan with the "extremist" Syrians ["The Week," June 10]. The complex nature of Middle Eastern politics does not always lend itself to such simplistic categories, as the behavior of Jordan and Syria demonstrates.

The "moderate" Jordanians have participated side by side with the "extremist" Syrians in every Arab invasion of Israel. "Moderate" Jordan, like "extremist" Syria, refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist. Jordan provides aid and comfort to terrorist groups. Indeed, there have been many more terror attacks against Israel from Jordan than from Syria in recent years, and the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* reported in April that the Hamas terrorist underground has transferred its headquarters from the Gaza Strip to the Jordanian capital, Amman, where it operates with the approval of King Hussein.

In short, the political differences between Jordan and Syria are far more subtle than broad terms like "moderate" and "extremist" would indicate.

Gary Wolf
Executive Director
Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America
Philadelphia, Pa.

Truth Be Told

Bruce McKenna's article fails to present an objective picture of the situation in Pakistan ["The Subcontinental Blues," May 27]. Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's economic policies have earned him widespread appreciation both at home and abroad. There has been no conflict between the President and the Prime Minister over these policies, as claimed by the writer. The President has time and again publicly expressed his support for Mr. Sharif's policies in various spheres of national life, including the economy.

The industrial peace that prevails in Pakistan today also contradicts Mr. McKenna's claims of labor unrest in the country. The massive program of privatization, disinvestment, and deregulation launched by the government has indeed opened up new avenues of rapid industrialization and consequently increased job opportunities in the country.

Mansoor Suhail
Press Attaché
Pakistan Mission to the UN
New York, N.Y.

For the sake of the subcontinent, how I wish the press attaché were correct! I can only wonder why Mr. Suhail neglected to comment on the gist of my piece: the army's growing dissatisfaction with Sharif. As for the President, unfortunately Ghulam Ishaq Khan, along with Nawaz Sharif, must march to the snare drum's beat. —BMcK

Character Question

The title of John Simon's film review "Dirty Doings" [May 27] is an appropriate description not only of the film he is reviewing but of the review itself. Furthermore, it appropriately describes the editorial decision to accord so much space to something so obviously beneath the standards of NATIONAL REVIEW. If you cannot stop Mr. Simon from bringing the (frankly pornographic) content of mainstream Hollywood movies into your magazine then you should discontinue reviewing Hollywood's products. NATIONAL REVIEW has always had a somewhat Catholic character, reflected in its editorial decency and manners. I have always found that to be a charming quality (speaking as an Evangelical Protestant). The review in question lowers what I like to think of as your standards.

Tom Blair
San Pedro, Calif.

Transposed

In the June 10 "Off the Record," the name of William Barr was inadvertently changed to Henry Barr in the course of editing. Apologies all around.

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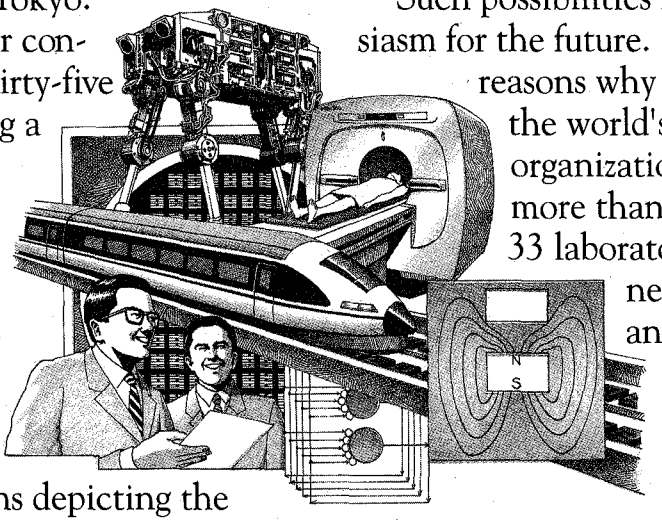

The technology displayed at the fair has immense potential to change the world for the better. Meissner-levitated trains, for example, could offer the speed and comfort of air transportation at far less cost to the environment. By eliminating the need for exploratory surgery, high-speed MRI systems would promote early detection of heart disease. Walking robots could take over hazardous tasks, such as cleaning up chemical spills. Neural computers capable of learning and recognizing signatures could eliminate the need for identification cards at banks and other institutions, making life easier for all of us.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Vice, Virtue, and Vice-Versa

■ I never thought I would be moved to defend Senator Edward Kennedy. But *The New Republic*'s recent cover story —"The End of the Dream"—drives me to sympathy for him.

James Carroll's article is a long liberal lament at his discovery that the senator is a Kennedy, namely a womanizing child of privilege whose sins are always forgiven. Mr. Carroll, however, casts a stone—though not, it must be admitted, the first stone.

Like other liberals, he had long turned a blind eye to tales of the senator's womanizing because of his yeoman work for liberalism. But this theory of "two spheres of morality," public and private, had caused liberals to acquiesce in making women "victims." They must in future judge the public and private behavior of politicians against the same standard of virtue.

In other words, Mr. Carroll has joined the flocks of liberals making their instinctive migration from the free-and-easy Sixties to feminist victimology. And he is feeling extremely noble as a result. He wants to protect women from the senator.

Now, womanizing may be discreditable, but it is not rape. It is, indeed, an activity in which the libertine has accomplices rather than victims. But Mr. Carroll defends women against the senator at the moment when his nephew is facing a rape charge. Without that, would Mr. Carroll have an article?

The larger question of the link between public and private virtue is more complicated. It would be a quixotic enterprise to promote liberalism, conservatism, or any public doctrine relying solely on the help of spotless leaders. As Arthur Balfour said of justice, there simply isn't enough saint-hood to go round. The cause of virtue itself would fail without the sympathy and support of those who are sinners of one kind or another in private life (as all of us are).

If we cannot expect private virtue, however, we can demand that our political leaders not publicly endorse serious vice. That may involve some hypocrisy, as when a private adulterer makes a show of his happy family life.

But such hypocrisy is preferable to the frank justification of adultery or to the shifty public casuistry on abortion of politicians whose private lives are doubtless impeccable.

For myself, I would rather be governed by the average sensual hypocrite than by either Gandhi or Mr. Carroll, whose argument can be summed up as a politically correct version of the Pharisee's prayer: "Lord, I thank Thee I am not as other men—I am sensitive to women's needs."

■ The letters continue to trickle in expressing outrage at my remarks on smoking, drinking, and jogging. This was beginning to make me feel rather smug, since nothing pleases a writer more than a strong reaction from his readers. ("Another canceled subscription—we've got a hit on our hands.")

But I have been put firmly in my place by the avalanche of letters that the omission of the "Trans-O-Gram" from our last issue has provoked. In no time at all, this easily overtopped my own modest postbag of protests.

Nor is it only the volume that is impressive. The letters are heavily Gothick in tone, making frequent references to such events as the Fall of the Roman Empire, the Slaughter of the Innocents, and the treason of Benedict Arnold, in all of which the omission of the "Trans-O-Gram" apparently played a crucial role.

All I can say is that I am sorry. We too enjoy the "Trans-O-Gram." But we needed a page for space reasons and, alas, we forgot that it had been one of two regular features omitted from our "Victory in the Gulf" issue. We should have selected something else.

But we won't be omitting the "Trans-O-Gram" again for some years to come. We wouldn't dare. So you can renew your subscriptions in perfect confidence. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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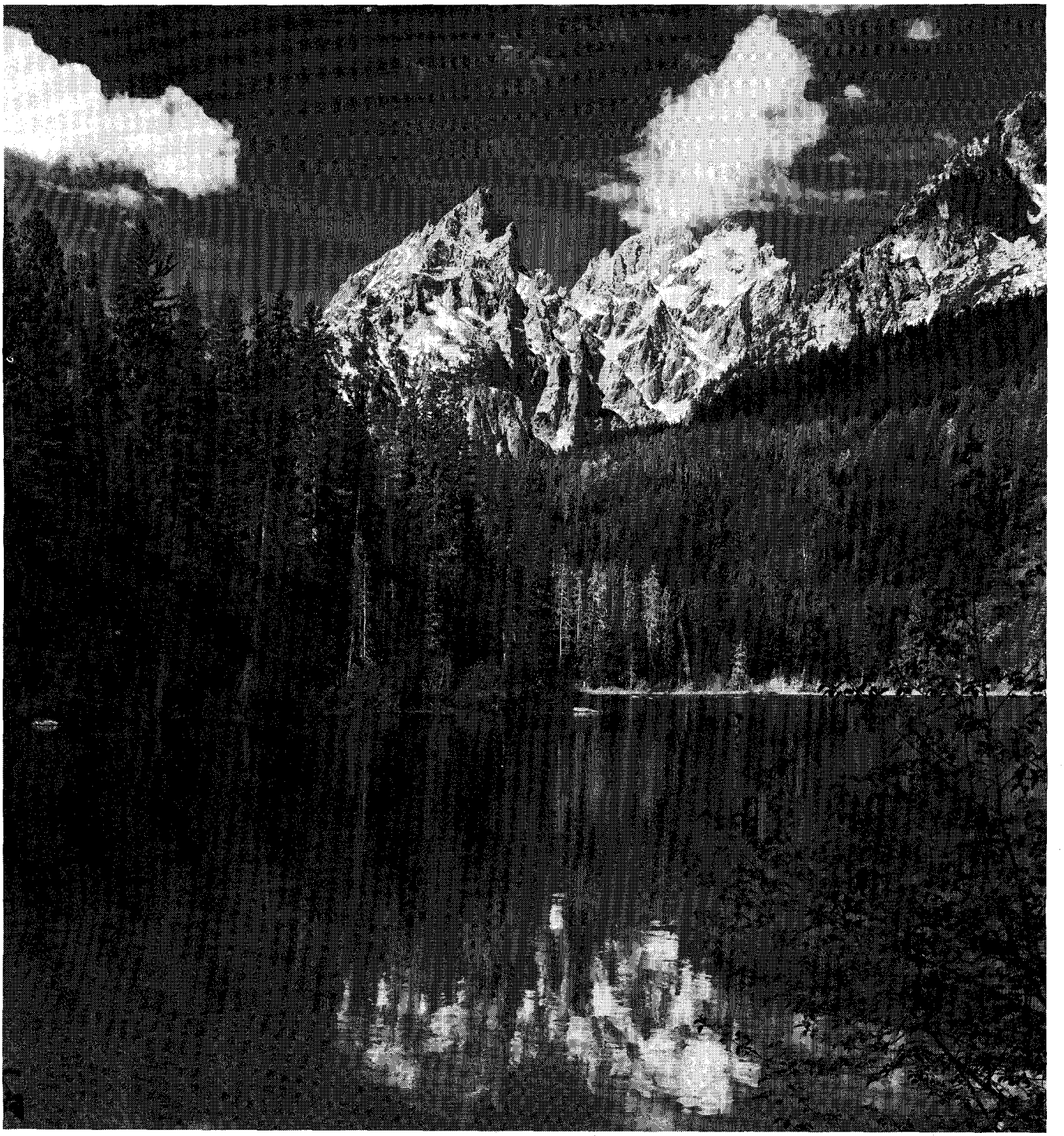

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ON THE RECORD

■ **Tom Harkin** is emerging as hottest item in Democratic Party for 1992. As senator from Iowa, Harkin has head-start in important early Iowa caucuses. . . . At Impac meeting of fifty important left-liberal Democratic fundraisers, Harkin went over big. Impac organizer **Nathan Landow** says Harkin "gave everyone a very warm feeling about him." . . . **Evans & Novak** believe Harkin will emerge as candidate of Left if **Mario Cuomo** and **Jesse Jackson** "stay on the sidelines." . . . Former Sen. **Paul Tsongas**, only declared candidate at the moment, says he will not accept PAC donations, making his chances of securing nomination dimmer yet. . . . As their desperation increases, so does the anti-**Bush** rhetoric among Democratic leaders. Democratic National Chairman **Ron Brown** recently accused the President of choosing "the politics of **Jesse Helms** and [former Ku Klux Klan grand wizard] **David Duke** instead of the politics of **Martin Luther King**" in opposing Democrats' civil-rights bill. . . . Jesse Jackson went Brown one better: "Bush in the White House," he said, "is more dangerous than **George Wallace** was in the schoolhouse door." . . . In point of fact the White House supported Gov. **Buddy Roemer**, a Democrat turned Republican, over David Duke in Louisiana state convention. Winner of convention endorsement, however, was Republican Rep. **Clyde Holloway**. Holloway had support of **William Bennett**, who gave keynote speech at the convention. Under Louisiana law, Duke, Roemer, Holloway and former Gov. **Edwin Edwards** will fight it out for governorship in October primary.

■ Republican **Steven Pierce** pulled a **Jim Courter** in Massachusetts, backtracking on his previous pro-life position. Result a very narrow (under two thousand votes) loss to leftist Democrat **John Olver** in by-election to fill seat of the late **Silvio Conte**, until now the only GOP seat in Massachusetts congressional delegation. Olver is regarded as high-tax man from his service as chairman of State Senate taxation committee. Says State Senate President **William Bulger**, a Democrat, Olver "could slap a tax on a galloping horse." . . . Rep. **Tom Campbell** was only Republican member of the California delegation to vote for the Democrats' civil-rights bill. Campbell plans to run against conservative TV commentator **Bruce Herschensohn** for **Alan Cranston**'s seat next year. Fears of a split in conservative ranks (see "Off the Record," p. 56) have been allayed by late news that popular Rep. **Bob Dornan**, who had been thinking about running himself, has endorsed Herschensohn. . . . Tantalizing answer from **Pat Buchanan** to C-Span caller who asked if he had ruled out running for President. Answer: No, but as "a practical matter," yes. Buchanan added that journalism would be his lifetime profession.

■ Almost as significant as **Boris Yeltsin**'s big win in Russian election (he got 60 per cent of the vote) was the trouncing former Prime Minister **Nikolai Ryzhkov**, **Mikhail Gorbachev**'s candidate, took. He won only 16 per cent of vote, and **Vladimir Zhirinovsky**, the orthodox nationalist, came in a poor third with 7 per cent. . . . Yeltsin's deputy prime minister, **Mikhail Malei**, says the Russian Republic plans to privatize 20 per cent of state property by the end of 1992. One novel approach: it will accord each citizen coupons worth 7,000 rubles with which to buy into state enterprises that are being privatized. . . . The demise of the Soviet enterprise in Africa was completed with fall of **Mengistu** regime in Ethiopia and last month's signing of a peace treaty between former Marxist president **José Eduardo dos Santos** of Angola and freedom fighter **Jonas Savimbi** of UNITA. . . . Two other Soviet satellites in Africa, Mozambique and the Congo (Brazzaville), have also shed their Marxist ideology, and the last of the quarter-million troops **Fidel Castro** sent to Africa to do the Kremlin's bidding have sailed home. . . . While the **Organization of African Unity** again called for continued sanctions against South Africa at its recent Kampala meeting, the *New York Times* notes that no one is talking about "front-line states" any more as trade increases between Pretoria and its southern-African neighbors—Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique. . . . British Prime Minister **John Major** is urging international community to lift sanctions given the repeal of the last apartheid laws, and is trying to line up Australian Prime Minister **Bob Hawke**. Very probable: an easing of the ban against South African athletes in international sports events. . . . Welcome shift in post-**Papandreou** Athens. The Greek government has ordered extradition of **Abdulrahim Khaled**, who had been tried in absentia in Italy and sentenced to life in prison for his role in hijacking of cruise liner *Achille Lauro* and murder of **Leon Klinghoffer**. This is in sharp contrast with TLC the Papandreou government lavished on suspected Arab terrorists.

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"Raisa Gorbachev just can't put down that biography of Nancy Reagan."

■ Neatest trick of the week: The new free Soviet radio station VEDO in Volgograd (né Stalingrad) is offering its listeners Voice of America programming on a daily basis. VEDO's transmitter was used, pre-*glasnost*, to jam VOA broadcasts.

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THE WEEK

■ The remains of President Zachary Taylor are being tested to see if he was poisoned. Next the Democrats will be demanding to know where Reagan was at the time.

■ Harvard's Kennedy School has announced that Michael Dukakis will give a seminar on "Economic Development." It is rumored that Clark Clifford has been lined up for one on "The Principles of Laundry Management."

■ William Cohen, Richard Lugar, and John Warner became the first three Republican senators to break with the GOP consensus on SDI, publicly urging the White House to press for a ground-based system, foregoing the space-based "brilliant pebbles" program, which President Bush supports. The Republicans said the Senate was "highly unlikely" to agree to the "brilliant pebbles" approach, which is probably a correct political judgment; and since the best should not be the enemy of the good, it is also probably prudent for the Administration to go for what it can get. The defectors introduced an interesting wrinkle into their argument, however, by urging the White House to seek Soviet consent to install ground-based defenses. That implies they believe that the Soviets might consent. Does it not follow that they think Moscow more tractable than Congress? They should know.

■ Are advocates for the homeless really obliged to advocate the way the homeless live? They expressed outrage when Atlanta Mayor Maynard H. Jackson recently moved to impose criminal penalties for aggressive street begging, sleeping in vacant buildings, and loitering in parking lots. Granting, for the sake of argument, that no level of government can arbitrarily institutionalize people it labels as mentally ill, surely certain behavior—abuse of passersby, loud angry monologues, frantic movements, gross disregard for public sanitation—merits at least a "move along" from the cop on the beat? The "homelessness" problem is not primarily a housing shortage: it is a rise in the number of people unwilling or unable to exercise self-control or self-discipline. While charity dictates that we help them, "society" is not to blame for their problems—except for having relaxed those standards over the past thirty years.

■ The Way We Live Now: In 1979, a train car carrying a chemical shipment from a Monsanto Company chemical plant derailed in the town of Spurgeon, Missouri. Nineteen thousand gallons of a chemical used in wool preservatives were spilled. In all those gallons there was the equivalent of a teaspoonful of dioxin, then thought to be the most carcinogenic substance made by man (environmentalists now consider it much less sinister). In 1984, 65 Spurgeonites took Monsanto to court for their ensuing aches and pains. After three and a half years of trial, and one hundred thousand pages of transcript, a jury gave the plaintiffs $16.25 million. Now, after three and a half more years, an appellate court has voided the award because the jury had not found any actual damage resulting from the spill, but was simply punishing Monsanto for assorted wrongful acts. Even so, Monsanto had a narrow escape: one of the appellate judges wanted to send the case back for a new trial, but two killjoy colleagues decided that everyone had had enough fun.

■ Okay, we're starting to get tired of the term "politically correct." Unfortunately, the left-liberal intolerance to which it refers is getting worse, not better. Out in Wisconsin, PC standards, together with the usual smear campaign, are being used against a nominee to the state Board of Regents. The attack against Terry Kohler, a conservative businessman, philanthropist, and 1982 GOP gubernatorial nominee is led by the radical *Madison Capital Times*; a recent *Capital Times* report "proved" his racism and hatred of women by noting that he has given money to the Heritage Foundation, the Rockford Institute, and Paul Weyrich's Free Congress Research and Ed-

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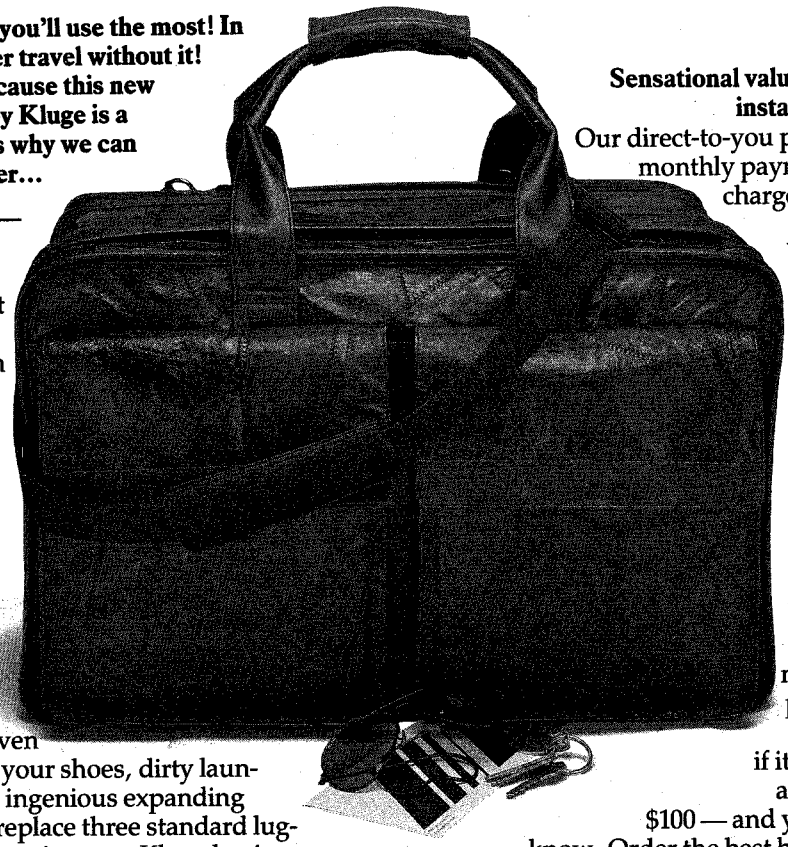

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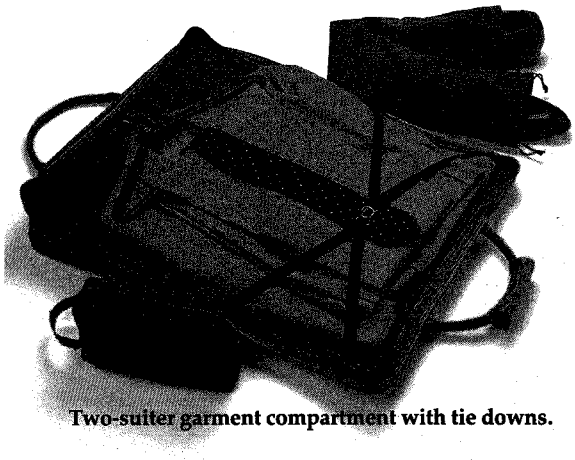

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ucation Foundation. Heritage, in case you didn't know, once took the same side of a controversy as the KKK (the article doesn't mention analogous ACLU "support" for the KKK), while Rockford opposes women in the workplace (it published an article critical of Senator Kennedy's child-care bill). Kohler's larger donations to historically black colleges were adduced as evidence that he supports segregation. But this does not qualify as McCarthyism of the Left: Senator McCarthy had higher standards of evidence.

■ The citizens of Leningrad have voted by a landslide—55 per cent—to change the city's name back to St. Petersburg, and Mikhail Gorbachev is rightly nervous. First de-Stalinization, then de-Leninization. De-Gorbachevization, anyone?

■ Kuwait's martial-law courts are not going to win any prizes from Alan Dershowitz. There was the man who got 15 years for wearing a Saddam T-shirt (though he was also said to have been an informer). More recently, six "journalists"—they put out an Iraqi propaganda sheet during the occupation—were sentenced to death. No one should cavil at ferocious sentences. The invasion of Kuwait was an obscenity, and those who collaborated with it are obscene. The Kuwaitis should realize, however, that procedures that are not in line with Western norms of justice will seem to diminish the justice of their liberation. We say "seem to diminish," because the liberation of Kuwait will have been just, even if the Kuwaitis behave recklessly indeed. D-Day was not invalidated when the *Résistance* shaved the heads of girls who had slept with German soldiers.

■ The eruption of Mount Pinatubo comes at a particularly sensitive time, as Philippine and U.S. negotiators are preparing for the last round of talks over the future of U.S. bases there, whose lease expires in September. This raises two questions, one military, one political, both critical. Regarding their military value, the most important asset in the Philippines is Subic Bay Naval Base. With its strategic location astride important sea lanes in Southeast Asia, its deep-water port, its natural harbor, and its English-speaking workforce, Subic would be impossible to duplicate in one spot anywhere else—even leaving aside the enormous costs of a move. The political question is trickier. The millions in aid we have doled out to the Philippines thus far have shored up a statist system (the U.S. Government is the Filipinos' second largest employer, after their own), bred resentment among the country's elites, and in general set horrible precedents for Washington's relations with other developing countries. If we are going to continue to have a military presence there, let's do it because both sides agree on the strategic benefits, and not because we've bribed the night watchman to look the other way.

■ One of George Bush's finest moments in public life came in his 1984 debate with Geraldine Ferraro, when he was challenged for his "flip-flop" on abortion. Yes, Mr. Bush replied, he had had a change of heart. Since his "pro-choice" candidacy in the 1980 primaries, millions of abortions had occurred, he explained. Could they all have been "hard cases"? he wondered; how could one not be moved by such "brutality"? Mr. Bush has remained faithful to that conviction—most recently in a letter to Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell saying simply, "I will veto any legislation that weakens current law or existing regulations." Meanwhile, Republican pro-abortion nag Ann Stone persists in warning the President that he must compromise on the party's anti-abortion plank, or else face a loss in popularity. An odd warning, since Mr. Bush has already been on three victorious national tickets committed to that plank. But more important than whatever opposition he may face is the fact that, even as the brutality continues, Mr. Bush can at least face himself.

■ On the free-speech front, the Wisconsin affiliate of the ACLU is demanding that the state remove from all public-school classes a sex-education textbook entitled *Sex Respect*. Suspicious of the title—Hmm, what could those words have to do with one another?—the group's attorneys investigated and, sure enough, turned up a constitutional infraction: the book refers favorably to such notions as abstinence and chastity, and suggests bizarrely that AIDS might have some connection with immoderate homosexual conduct. Thus, concludes the ACLU, it perpetuates stereotypes based on gender and "sexual orientation." Still more alarming, *Sex Respect* presents two-parent, heterosexual couples as "the sole model of a healthy, 'real' family"—thus ignoring the countless possible variations. Obviously, the safeguarding of Wisconsin's civil liberties requires that the book be banned at once and such outrageous ideas never again heard in the classroom.

■ The new *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* is emphatically politically correct, flagging words now deemed to be offensive to one or another aggrieved group, and infusing even its definitions with political correctness. That's the bad news. The good news is that the dictionary seems to be bombing. Without even lifting a wet finger to test the *Zeitgeist*, *Time* ridiculed it, and even the *New York Times* accorded it a chilly reception. The brothers and sisters at Random House may be, as they say in their neighborhood, behind the curve.

■ The annual General Assembly of the Presbyterian

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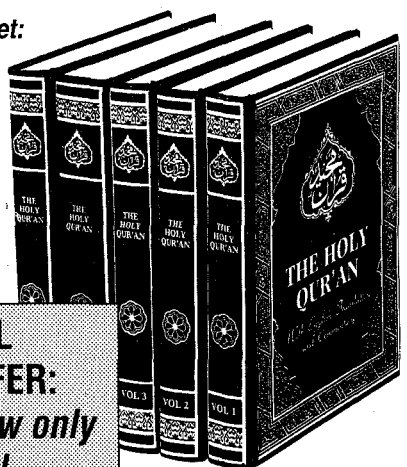

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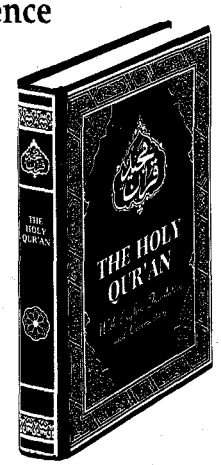

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■ Readers will receive the next issue, dated July 29, three weeks, rather than the normal two, after this issue.

Church (U.S.A.) met in Baltimore to discuss a report on human sexuality which gave its blessing to fornication and homosexuality. It was *Old Mortality* meets Masters and Johnson. *Old Mortality* won, by a vote of 534 to 31, rejecting the report and declaring that "the marriage covenant between one man and one woman" was "God-given." The problem with the Presbyterians, and the other mainline Protestant denominations, is that after every such defeat, the libertines remain, to fight the next battle—or some battle currently inconceivable (planet worship? goddess worship?). What the mainliners have to do is to identify these people for what they are: post-Christians. And to say that if they want a church of their own, well, it's a free country, but they have no business being in any church founded by John Calvin, or John Wesley—or Jesus Christ.

■ Here and there, on Father's Day, apparently in response to a book by some poet, men gathered to put their arms around each other's shoulders, "bond," and announce their manhood as follows: Speaker: "I am Joe, son of John, son of Pete. I am a man." To which the congregation responds: "Ho." Then they play drums. Sometimes the fine points of American gender identity escape us.

Means over Ends

IN HIS BATTLE with congressional Democrats over their civil-rights bill, George Bush has again shown what he's made of by refusing to back down on charges that it is a "quotas bill," which it certainly is. Indeed, the President's forcefulness in pressing the case against quotas is a big reason the Democrats aren't getting anywhere with this bill. The only reason they are able to press him at all is that he has insisted on the need for his *own* civil-rights bill. And to be fair to his critics, the Bush package is not all that different from what the Democrats want.

A little bit of history here. In the last few years the Supreme Court has made about six important civil-rights rulings that finally came down on the side of the Constitution; the most important of these, *Ward's Cove Packing Co.* v. *Atonio*, essentially held that statistical imbalance in the workplace alone was not enough to prove discrimination. These were the kinds of decisions conservatives had long hoped for, but the President's immediate reaction was to speak of "legislative remedies."

Hence the Bush bill. In addressing the *Ward's Cove* issue, the President's alternative is not as clearly pro-quota as what the Democrats propose, but apart from that there are no major differences. Both assign the burden of proof to the accused employer. And now that the Democrats have agreed to cap damages, the dividing line is much fuzzier. All of which gives more impetus to the new "compromise" being put forth by Senator John Danforth (R., Mo.), which in its essentials would accomplish most of what the Democrats want.

But this is what you get when you elevate means over ends. Conservatives will always lose so long as they define things in terms of legislation and not outcome; just as diplomats who announce how badly they need a treaty lose their negotiating leverage. The President has allowed the Democrats to hold this issue over his head because he has let them know just how badly he wants to sign a civil-rights bill. The best outcome in this fight is not a compromise between the worst and the bad. The best outcome would be no bill at all and a conservative civil-rights strategy that would offer America's poor, of all races, not false "rights" but real opportunities.

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W. H. VON DREELE

Small Earthquake in Beltway

PRESIDENT BUSH made a full-dress defense of his approach to domestic affairs in a speech on the White House lawn earlier this month and the earth hardly moved.

The President addressed crime and transportation, accusing Congress of dragging feet on his agenda. But the problems of the criminal-justice system are largely procedural tangles generated by judges. The Administration's crime bill does propose one reform—lifting restrictions on evidence now deemed to be illegally obtained, so long as the police acted in good faith—but real change, for good or for ill (mainly ill), will have to come from the courts, not the White House or Congress. On transportation

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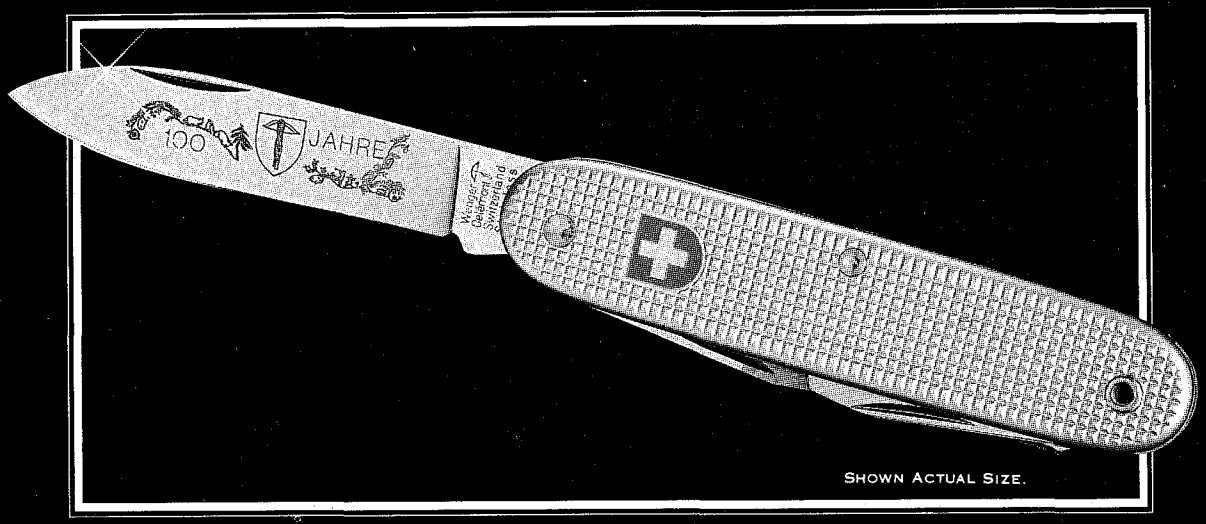

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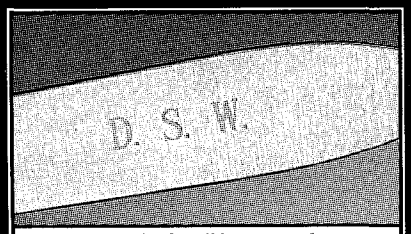

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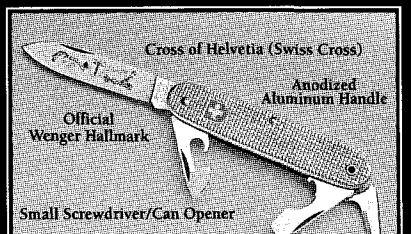

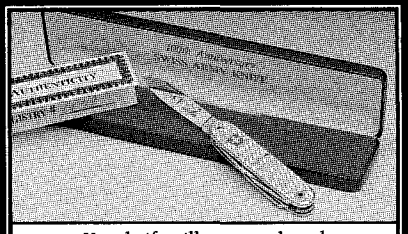

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there is even less to get excited about. The Administration and the Senate each have a bill. The price tags are the same—$105 billion—but the Senate would spend less of that sum on highways.

The point of the speech for Mr. Bush was not these concerns, but a necessarily modest effort to define himself philosophically. He acknowledged that the preceding decade had created twenty million new jobs. Yet "millions still trudge the path of poverty. The marketplace alone can't solve all our problems." The country would have to follow "a better way," combining government "properly defined" and the market "properly understood."

Thus, even as the Vatican abandons its century-long snipe hunt for a political and economic "third way," George Bush embarks on one. But perhaps that is putting his speech in too long a historical perspective. The President's concerns are immediate, and positional—he wants to put himself at a proper distance from Ronald Reagan on the one hand, and from the Democrats on the other: kinder than the former; more prudent than the latter.

Like all politicians who define themselves positionally, however, he leaves the agenda in his enemies' hands—which for now means, in the hands of the Democrats. His approach is to wait till the Dem-

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1982	31,614	17,473	3.2	11.4	22.9	7.3
1989	35,975	20,209	2.6	11.2	30.9	13.8
	Percentage change					
1975–82	–3.9	–13.6	52.3	81.0	2.7	–12.0
1982–89	13.8	15.7	–18.7	–1.8	34.9	89.0

During the Reagan boom, 1982 to 1989, the median black family's income increased 15.7 per cent compared to a 13.8 per cent rise for the median white family. Those blacks with sufficient skills and education to garner incomes of more than $50,000 (1989 dollars) did particularly well. The share of black families in this category increased 89.0 per cent between 1982 and 1989, or more than twice the 34.9 per cent rise for whites.

Unfortunately, the percentage of black families with incomes below $5,000 rose dramatically during the late Seventies and early Eighties, and was virtually unaffected by the subsequent boom. Obviously an income below $5,000 means nobody in the family worked full-time throughout the year. Indeed, the labor-force-participation rate for black males—the fraction either employed or actively looking for work—declined throughout the Eighties.

Does racial discrimination explain why black men drop out of the economic mainstream during periods of record job creation? The Urban Institute recently tested this proposition with scientific precision. In the summer of 1990 ten black–white pairs of applicants were sent on 476 carefully monitored job searches. The two members of each pair of applicants were matched as to job qualifications, experience, and demeanor; each pair answered the same entry-level job ad.

Lo and behold: in 85 per cent of the cases the black applicant received a job offer comparable to or better than the one his white counterpart received; in only 15 per cent of cases did the white get a job denied the black. In only 5 per cent of cases did the potential employer steer the black applicant to a less desirable position than his white counterpart, and even this was partially offset by the 3 per cent of whites steered to less desirable positions than blacks.

The Urban Institute study supports (inadvertently perhaps) what conservatives have long asserted: family disintegration, not racial discrimination, accounts overwhelmingly for the relatively large number of blacks in the lowest income bracket. The fraction of poor blacks who live in female-headed families increased from 48 per cent in 1970 to 60 per cent today. Although income differences between intact black and white families are fairly manageable (a black college-educated married couple averaged $52,020 in 1989 versus $57,224 for its white counterpart), median incomes of black *female-headed* families are not much more than half of their white counterparts'. Clearly, the principal economic drag on black families is a welfare system that encourages family breakups and nonemployment.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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ocrats move—then propose to reach their destination by a slower route.

That means a lot of huffing and puffing about transportation bills from now till 1996—without really getting anywhere.

Ashes in Our Mouths (Cont.)

DONALD KIRK's reporting from northern Iraq (see page 20) conveys a depressing message. In our eagerness to bring our troops home we are mortgaging the future. UN troops, no matter how well intentioned and dedicated, do not provide the reassurance or the deterrent power of Americans. Saddam may perhaps hesitate to overrun a UN force and risk reawakening the ire of the international community; on the other hand, the demonstrated ineffectuality of the UN forces can only enhance Saddam's ability to press his advantage through intimidation.

Not only the Kurds will be the victims. The continuing American retreat undermines the credibility of Security Council Resolution 687, which obliged Iraq to dismantle its nuclear-, chemical-, and biological-weapons capabilities. The information—received through a recent defector—that much of Iraq's nuclear-weapons program survived the war is grim news. Saddam's ability to get away with serious cheating increases with every passing day. What punishment could he conceivably suffer for such defiance once U.S. troops have gone home—aside from more paper resolutions from New York?

As *NR* has argued, Saddam's recovery is something devoutly to be regretted. International pressures to lift economic sanctions will eventually mount; even if we veto such a lifting of sanctions, international cheating will spread. For much of the international discipline in enforcing sanctions, too, is a function of the perception of America's determination. What have other nations to fear from us if they are caught evading sanctions—other than more paper criticisms from Washington?

Saddam may be on his good behavior for a while—until all U.S. troops are home enjoying their victory parades, and until he has had a run at getting economic sanctions removed. Then we'll see.

Eastern Approaches

THE North Atlantic Alliance, at its semi-annual gathering of foreign ministers, issued a statement on June 6 on the question of Eastern Europe's security. It was an excellent statement, declaring: "Our own security is inseparably linked to that of all other states in Europe. The consolidation and preservation throughout the continent of democratic societies and their freedom from any form of coercion or intimidation are therefore of direct and material concern to us."

As *NR* readers will recall (see Peter Rodman's piece in our May 27 issue), this was a subject on which NATO and the Bush Administration had been strangely reticent. The Western Allies had often declared their interest in Eastern Europe's prosperity and democracy, but shied away from claiming any direct stake in its security. What, then, was to protect these fledgling democracies from renewed Soviet pressures? Where did they fit into the balance of power? NATO membership, while an appealing idea, would undoubtedly be complicated to arrange, involving a commitment to come to their defense if attacked—a commitment that not all the Allied parliaments would necessarily be prepared to make.

Nevertheless, history teaches us that we neglect Eastern Europe's security at our peril. If we are building now for the long term, which we imagine ourselves to be doing, then we are obliged to think seriously about ensuring against a Russia that may be strong again ten years from now, or a balance of power that may go awry again. It is a simple matter for the Allies to declare that they would regard their own security as being affected by a renewed Soviet bid for hegemony in Eastern Europe.

One source of hesitation about saying this was a fear of rubbing the Soviets' noses in their new weakness, or provoking them at a time of internal turbulence. But the uncertainties of the Soviet evolution were an argument *for* clarifying our policy, not against doing so. The Eastern Europeans lobbied hard, especially in Western European capitals and at NATO headquarters. Their entreaties bore fruit. The NATO meeting announced various other practical measures to expand contacts with the new democracies' defense establishments. These steps, plus the Alliance's simple affirmation of strategic reality, are a big advance in the right direction.

Still Active Measures

"ACTIVE MEASURES" is the translation of a sly Russian phrase for one of the KGB's traditional activities against the West—hardball political warfare via front groups, disinformation, and other forms of covert and overt manipulation of Western political opinion. One of the innovations of the Reagan era was a U.S. decision to blow the whistle on these activities. Bipartisan concern gave rise to a law requiring the State Department to issue regular reports on the subject.

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What is striking is how much of this political warfare is still going on against us, even in the Gorbachev era—and even as Gorbachev turns desperately to the West for economic aid. Some of the more egregious disinformation is subsiding—like the instigated rumors that the U.S. was testing biological weapons that worked only on blacks, or that we had developed AIDS as a weapon, or other gems—but it subsided only after the U.S. pressed the matter hard at high levels of the Soviet government. Communist front organizations like the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the International Youth Organization went through a period of disarray after the Revolution of 1989, but they seem to be back in business again, and well funded. Soviet Communist Party figures who were always closely involved with such activities remain in high positions, such as Gennady Yanayev, now vice president of the USSR, and Valentin Falin, now head of the International Department of the Party Central Committee Secretariat. Falin's star has been rising since the departure of Eduard Shevardnadze from the Foreign Ministry; he was the third-ranking member of Gorbachev's delegation in Japan and accompanied Yanayev to Rajiv Gandhi's funeral.

This subject ought to be on our agenda with the Soviets whenever they talk of economic aid (as ought their defense buildup, aid to Third World thugs, and industrial espionage). Needless to say, the free world has no interest in subsidizing such warfare against it, and a Soviet leadership that truly wanted to demonstrate its conversion into a constructive member of the international community would put a stop to it.

Just Stories

THELMA & LOUISE is, as John Simon says in this issue, this year's Movie of the Moment. Liberals and feminists tend to love it; conservatives, and many just plain men, see it as male-bashing. The normally cool and collected John Leo of *U.S. News & World Report* calls its motif of "transformative violence" an "explicit fascist theme, wedded to the bleakest form of feminism." The aesthetic merits we happily leave to the unsurpassed Mr. Simon. As for the film's philosophy, we can only say: Please, everyone, calm down!

Thelma & Louise is an entertaining little film, with obvious debts to such predecessors as *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. Except, of course, that both leads here are women. The ending seems to be saying something about sisterhood, but it could as easily be taken to mean Thelma should have stayed home with her man. (It actually means that the scriptwriter, Callie Khouri, had created a situation she didn't know how to resolve, except by an arbitrary Big Gesture.)

The only peril we see to the Republic is that the amazing overreaction to *Thelma & Louise* may deter some people from seeing a lightly entertaining movie, or lead them to expect something more.

Meanwhile, also from Hollywood comes *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, starring Kevin Costner as a New Age Robin, along with a feminist Maid Marian (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio) and an affirmative-action "Moor" (Morgan Freeman). The critics are already hooting at the film's ideological anachronisms. Vincent Canby of the *New York Times* calls the movie "a mess, a big, joyless reconstruction of the Robin Hood legend that comes out firmly for civil rights, feminism, religious freedom, and economic opportunity for all." Rita Kempley of the *Washington Post* calls it "a fantasy about the redistribution of wealth and the failure of the trickle-down theory." What's more, the Merrie Men are all Americans, while the villains are Englishmen—leading Richard Corliss of *Time* to remark witheringly: "They sound like tourists stranded in Sherwood Forest. And they inadvertently give a new meaning to the story: now Robin and his band are vagrant colonials who save England from those who can actually speak the language."

It seems that formerly safe liberal attitudes, far from giving a film immunity, have suddenly become either "controversial," or the butts of sophisticated humor. This could be the start of something big.

Judge Gesell Calls Him Off

Mr. Walsh, who was panting to ground
Colonel North, like the Baskerville hound,
Slavers some as he drops
The defendant from chops
That suggest he belongs in the pound.

W. H. VON DREELE

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Anent the (latest) Kennedy scandal, the victim alleges that on a 3:30 A.M. beach walk her assailant disrobed and went skinny-dipping in the ocean, after which the attack took place near the swimming pool. Let's see now; late March, pre-dawn chill, Atlantic Ocean—what is it they teach in the seminaries about cold showers?

Cordially,
William C. Fletcher
Lawrence, Kan.

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"Quick! Send out another invitation!"

Dear Mr. Fletcher: I don't honestly know. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Please see the attached *AID* [Agency for International Development] *Procurement Information Bulletin*. There can't possibly be enough Norplants to solve the problems in Washington.

Sincerely,
D. C. Crane
Dallas, Tex.

AID Procurement Information Bulletin
Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization / Minority Resource Center

ITEM SIX

Country:	AID/Washington
Authority:	AID Project 936-3057
Source/Origin:	AID Geographic Code 941 (Free World)
RFP NO.:	OP/COMS/P-91-004
Purchaser:	Agency for Int'l. Development Commodity Support Division Room 1400E, SA-14 Washington, D.C. 20523-1415
Commodity:	50,000 sets of Norplant contraceptive implants and 1,000 each Trocar. A provision for an option quantity of up to 50,000 additional sets of the Norplant and another 1,000 each Trocar shall be included.
Bid Deadline:	May 7, 1991

Dear Mr. Crane: You are quite right, but charity begins at home. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

The proposition that homosexuality is primarily genetic in nature ("Sodom and Begorrah," *NR*, April 29) gives rise to an interesting thought.

If our repressed, "homophobic" society forced homosexuals into the closet, especially during the Forties and Fifties, then these mutations would have fathered (much to their distaste, I presume) the young and middle-aged homosexuals we see today. Then it follows that homosexual proclivity is directly (or exponentially) related to the level of repression that was present in any given society during the *previous* generation. This would account for the greater visibility of these types today.

Now, if the current "correct" form of thinking prevails and repression diminishes to zero, won't all homosexuals reject women completely? And won't the genes that cause the phenomenon disappear? And then won't St. Patrick's Day be truly gay once again?

Best regards,
William F. X. Maughan
Effort, Pa.

■ Dear Bill:

Why, in your piece ridiculing Kitty Kelley's book about Mrs. Reagan (a subject about which you are as knowledgeable, I suspect, as you were about the crimes of Edgar Smith), do you trivialize fornication by calling it being "socially active" which you say is the way "they would put it in Hollywood" and citing, of all things, the Kinsey Report, which has been thoroughly discredited in an excellent book, *Kinsey, Sex and Fraud: The Indoctrination of a People* (Huntington House, 1990)? Why would you use such an immoral euphemism? I thought you were supposed to be a Christian.

John Lofton
Washington, D.C.

Dear John: Kinsey was not a theologian, dealing in normative morality, he was a statistician. And why do I use euphemisms? Because civility requires it. Cordially, Bill

—WFB

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ON THE SCENE

The Kurds' Fragile Peace

DONALD KIRK

Janet Hamlin

DOHUK, IRAQ

THE LIGHTS of the "city center" sparkle and twinkle at dusk. Young men, some in Western dress, others wearing the baggy pants, sashed blouses, and turbans that are almost uniforms for the Kurdish guerrillas, chat in cafés over cups of tea—or cans of Seven-Up, Pepsi, even beer. The clatter of dominoes vies with laughter and small talk. The women and children in this strictly Islamic society are all safely in their homes, and the men are free to enjoy the cool evening air after long days in non-air-conditioned shops and offices or in the nearby fields and hills.

It's an almost idyllic picture in this pleasant provincial center on the southern fringe of the "allied zone." It's an image of which the Americans and their allies are justly proud after more than two months of providing both the military security and the aid needed to induce the Kurds to come down from their camps in the mountains and resume some semblance of their former lives. It's a scene, though, that no one believes will last for very long after the allies go home.

Much of the small talk, one learns, revolves around Kurds' fears for the future—and their certainty that fighting will again flare across the mountains. "History tells us even the most innocent child will not be safe," says Ali Ahmad Berwari, a representative of Massoud Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) on the local committee of the Kurdistan Front, which took over many of the functions of a government in the absence of Iraqi authorities. "There were ten prisons in this city alone," says Berwari. "They had torture rooms. There was a law giving soldiers and police the right to shoot anyone in certain zones, and they would charge an 'execution fee' to recover the mutilated body."

Berwari and a young man carrying a Soviet-made AK-47 rifle gladly jump into my car, rented in Turkey, for a drive a few miles out of town to meet higher-ups in Berwari's own party and its sometime rival, the PUK or Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, under Jalal Talibani. Slogans self-consciously written in English, for the benefit of a stream of foreign officials and journalists, adorn the PUK office. "Yes to Democracy, No to Dictatorship," says the biggest one. "No to another Halarja," says another, conjuring the memory of a massacre in 1987 in which the Kurds say five thousand civilians were killed by poison-gas bombs dropped from Iraqi helicopters.

A former businessman named Shawkat Mushir, identifying himself as a member of the PUK central committee, predicts "another catastrophe" even while smiling benignly behind gold-rimmed glasses. "If the allies leave," he says, "Saddam's regime will be more powerful, there will be another civil war." We are chatting in a rambling stone building guarded by at least a dozen rifle-bearing men, all wearing the requisite Kurdish dress. Up a steep slope is the local headquarters of Barzani's party and, at the top, a fortress-like stone blockhouse over which flutters, incongruously, the Union Jack. British soldiers are at the gates, guaranteeing not only the safety of the Kurds against the Iraqis to the south but also at least an appearance of cooperation among often conflicting Kurds, eager as never before to show they are all "one people" under the Kurdistan Front.

"The Kurdish groups should stay together for longer," says Fadihil Merini, who says he is a member of the political bureau of the KDP. "We've been friends for a long time. We are together." The PUK and KDP—the largest among seven groups banded together in the Kurdistan Front—are especially together in their view of the prospects for security under the United Nations' High Commission for Refugees, all that's left of a Western presence here in the vacuum left by the departure of the allied troops. "With only five hundred guards, can they help?" Mushir asks rhetorically.

"Neither we nor you believe they can do what the allies have been doing," says Merini.

Departing American officers, while trying to offer the most optimistic view about the future, refer to the blue-uniformed UN guards—authorized to carry Smith & Wesson .38s and walkie-talkies, and no other weaponry—as "rent-a-cops" and say the United Nations must send in a full-scale multi-national, peace-keeping force similar to the one in southern Lebanon. They laugh over the miserable performance of UN guards in two shootouts here in early June in which Kurds attacked the headquarters of the ruling Iraqi Baathist Party, killing two party officials and three Iraqi policemen. The leader of the local UN

Mr. Kirk is a veteran foreign correspondent.

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guard contingent ordered his men to withdraw from the UNHCR building, which they had orders to protect—and retreat to a hotel down the road, occupied by American troops.

"The UN is the weakest thing in our whole strategy," says Army Colonel Dick Naab, a one-time Notre Dame football player who did two tours in Vietnam. "I'd like to see them more aggressive. We need a tripwire here to keep the Iraqi government honest. You need guys that are not afraid. They are the wrong guys to do it." The chief of the UNHCR office here, Pierre-France Pirlot, a veteran of crises from Somalia to Iran, responds simply: "We're equipped for a normal repatriation operation—to make sure the people can go home and the social infrastructure is in place."

Now the American troops in the hotel are gone, and the Marines and Army airborne troops, along with forces from half a dozen other nations, are packing up. Far from having behaved as "occupiers," they appeared in the minds of Kurds as saviors. The Marines at a checkpoint north of here confiscate weapons from Kurdish guerrillas, but they give them chits to recover them on their return. At a checkpoint to the south, an Army soldier accepts my explanation on behalf of a young Kurd and lets him hold on to his AK-47 rifle for the ride to the KDP and PUK offices.

Despite the reluctance of the United States to defend the Kurds for at least the rest of the year—the formal duration of the UNHCR's mandate here—one does not hear Kurds contrasting the American campaign to rescue oil-rich Kuwait with U.S. willingness to return "Kurdistan" to Iraq. Instead, Barzani's spokesman, Siamand Banaa, a British-educated engineer, says only that "the American Administration will be very glad to leave soonest without having lost an American life." If the Americans can conclude what they call "Operation Provide Comfort" without loss of blood, says Banaa, "it will be another glory added to the crown of George Bush."

Such cynicism, while understandable, may underestimate the efforts of American officers here to convince the Iraqis of the folly of returning in force, instigating a new round of violence against a people now armed to the teeth with captured weapons and ammunition. Colonel Naab has been meeting twice daily with an Iraqi general. "The Iraqis have operated with constraints," he says. "Militarily there's been no pressure." Naab doubts that "we will have an overt, provocative attack against the Kurds"—at least not while the world is still watching. The real fear, of course, is that the Iraqis will hold back—and then resume business as usual six months or a year from now when the suffering of the Kurds is strictly yesterday's news.

The best defense may be the memory of what happened to the Iraqis in Kuwait. "The Iraqi forces I've seen don't want to fight," says the Marine commander, Colonel Jim Jones. "We've had instances where they've fired, but no one's been hit, and I think our troops have shown remarkable restraint in not firing back." Jones arrived here when this city was abandoned. "Now 170,000 people are living here. Our young guys knew what they were doing sent a message to the Iraqis."

On the streets of Dohuk, the message is also obvious. Street vendors are likely to refuse money from Americans for cups of tea. Young guerrillas insist on paying for beer and food. Bystanders offer to escort you if you ask for directions. One grows accustomed to hearing thanks for the American role. The haunting question is whether it is all illusory. "We can fight the Iraqis with rifles," says a guerrilla veteran, "but if they come back with gas, we will all run again." □

Bush Democrats

WILLIAM McGURN

Tim Bower

WASHINGTON, D.C.

IN A CITY where those who are in the know outnumber those who aren't, George Bush's nomination of former Democratic National Committee Chairman Robert S. Strauss as his new envoy to Moscow came as a genuine surprise. Although the public line is that Strauss was pursued for more than a month, in fact the question was first popped to him less than a week before he accepted. It has left Republicans and Democrats alike bewildered. "The only explanation is that Clark Clifford has his legal troubles and Armand Hammer is dead," says one Administration wag.

If Strauss has ever expressed a strong opinion on Gorbachev or the USSR, it has somehow eluded Nexis. Strauss himself admitted to the *New York Times* that "if they want a Soviet expert, they made a mistake in picking me." But it was no mistake. Bush clearly did not want a Soviet expert, having passed over a number of eminently qualified Foreign Service officers whose names had been submitted to him for consideration.

What Bush wanted instead was a high-profile member of the Washington Establishment. A senior partner in the law firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, the ambassador-designate has a reputation for the big deal; at Thanksgiving dinner last year, for example, he picked up an easy $8-million commission for putting together a takeover by Matsushita Electrical Industrial Co. of MCA—the latter of which had Mr. Strauss on its board of directors. Perhaps more important, as part of the Texas mafia Strauss has known both Bush and Secretary of State James Baker a long time: Baker ran Gerald Ford's unsuccessful campaign in 1976 while Strauss was running the Democratic Party. Strauss came up against Baker again in 1980 when Baker was run-

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ning Bush's campaign and Strauss Jimmy Carter's.

"This is a major appointment or the President would not have picked someone so prominent and so plugged into the Washington power structure," says Helmut Sonnenfeldt, a member of the National Security Council under Nixon, and now with the Brookings Institution. "I suppose it is a signal to Gorbachev that Bush is interested in internal developments in the Soviet Union and wants to have someone there who might influence events in as broad-gauged a fashion as possible."

The unanswered question is how Bush wants to influence events. It's true that Strauss will make it easier to get whatever the President wants through a Democratic-controlled Congress. The irony here is that the Democrats in Congress have been tougher than the Administration vis-à-vis Moscow. A bill put forth by some of the most leftward members of the House—David Bonior (D., Mich.), Ron Dellums (D., Calif.), Barney Frank (D., Mass.), et al.—calls for U.S. recognition of the Baltics and support for the Republics over the central government. The Democratic leadership could have easily picked up on this, but Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D., Mo.) muffed his chance with an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* calling for a big aid package.

Despite conservative fears, however, Bush gives little indication that he plans on any massive aid to Gorbachev. Yes, there has been movement on Most Favored Nation status (which, after all, only reduces tariffs: it does not grant subsidies), and, yes, we did give them some agricultural credits, not to mention the go-ahead for Gorbachev to rattle the tin cup at the Group of Seven meeting in London this July. But despite the op-ed hysteria, there is no sign that any $100-billion aid-for-democracy grand bargain is in the works.

That leaves the Soviets themselves as the other end of the Strauss puzzle. Certainly having an ambassador who has the President's ear is an important asset; indeed, it is the whole justification for political appointees. But conservatives within the Administration argue that at a time when the Soviet Union is going through unprecedented historical changes, it might have been better to go with a career diplomat—like the departing ambassador, Jack Matlock—with an understanding of the Russian language and history. James Billington, a Russian scholar who is now the Librarian of Congress, has talked about the hundreds of new publications (many church-related) popping up all over the Soviet Union, each crammed with fascinating insights into what's going on across the USSR. Whatever assets Strauss brings to the job, going outside the accepted sources to this kind of information is not one of them. Last week's vote in which Boris Yeltsin became the first popularly elected official in Soviet history should remind our establishment man of the dangers of clinging too closely to the establishment. Strauss must be the ambassador to the Soviet Union, not the ambassador to Mikhail Gorbachev.

In short, though the surprise of his appointment has worn off, the mystery of what it means remains. We will probably know soon enough. If Strauss's first moves are toward Yeltsin and leaders of other Republics, America would be sending the signal that we aren't as interested in Gorbachev's own political survival as in his reforms. And Strauss's reputation and experience as a shrewd businessman (Archer–Daniels–Midland, of which he is a director, does a lot of business with the Soviets) means that his assessment of the investment climate there would be taken seriously in the business community.

In the end it all hinges on George Bush. Without doubt he has put one over on the Beltway. And he has put his potential enemies in Congress in a bind. But it all presumes that there is a strategy that the appointment is supposed to advance.

"If Bob Strauss were to come out and make some warnings about Soviet behavior, to say that *glasnost* is fine but it's not freedom of speech, that we like *perestroika* but it's not private property, and that START agreements are okay but not this one, that would be a masterstroke," says John Lenczowski, director of Soviet and European Affairs for the National Security Council in the Reagan Administration. "But that doesn't look like it's going to happen." □

Australia Comes of Age

GERARD HENDERSON

SYDNEY

IN the 1980s and early 1990s modern Australia grew up. The maturing process has yet to run its full course. However, it is now inconceivable that Australia will revert to the economic insularity which it widely embraced after achieving independence in 1901, even though Paul Keating, the main architect of economic reform Down Under, has resigned as deputy prime minister and treasurer (i.e., finance minister).

Keating resigned when his attempt to challenge Prime Minister Bob Hawke for the leadership of the Australian Labor Party failed, by 66 votes to 44. Keating explained his tactics to a packed media conference with traditional frankness—declaring that he "wanted" Hawke's job and "tried to take" it and rationalizing his tactics by claiming that there is something "very healthy" and "legitimate" in public life about "snatching" leadership.

Right now Paul Keating is sitting on the parliamentary backbench contemplating his political future. It is still possible that, in time, he will "snatch" the prime ministership. Alternatively he may resign from Parliament. But whatever the future holds, Keating will go down as a leader in the effort to make Australia outward looking and internationally competitive, moving away from its protectionist and highly regulated past.

VISITORS to Australia sometimes express surprise that a country so endowed with abundant natural resources and possessed of an intelligent and educated population could have ended up near the bottom of the pile of Western economies after having enjoyed the world's highest living standard at the turn of the century. Increasingly Australians—conservative and lib-

Mr. Henderson is Executive Director of the Sydney Institute, a privately funded think-tank.

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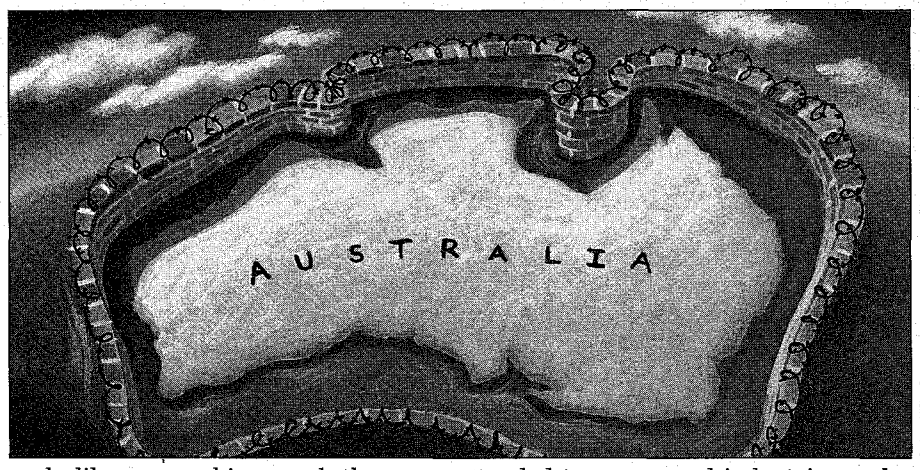

John Ward

eral alike—are asking much the same question. It is not before time.

If I had to nominate a date when Australia commenced getting it wrong, I would go back to 1905, when the internecine struggle within the conservative political movement was resolved. In that year Alfred Deakin's Melbourne-based Protectionist Party finally prevailed over George Reid's Sydney-based Free Trade Party. Soon after, Mr. Deakin—with backing of the growing trade-union movement and of the nascent Labor Party—set about implementing a policy of centralized industrial relations, tariff protection, and White Australia. It was stated at the time that this policy trio required Australia to turn its back on what was dismissively termed "the higgling of the markets."

For a country that was primarily an exporter of rural and mining commodities (and consequently dependent on fluctuating world prices) this was little short of economic insanity. The conservative and liberal regulators conceded this to some extent—but then opted for precisely the wrong remedy. They decided to ward off the economic consequences of their anti-market ideology by a policy of what was termed "protection all round."

Protection is to industry as drink is to an alcoholic—you can never get enough of it. So it was not surprising that in 1911, 1914, 1921, and 1926 there were further increases in protection under conservative and labor governments alike—and that was only for starters. The ideals of free trade and economic rationalism, which had underpinned the remarkable performance of the Australian economy prior to federation in 1901, were destined to die the death of a thousand tariffs, subsidies, quotas, and embargoes. Eventually protection was even extended to some rural industries under the agrarian socialism practiced by successive governments (many of them conservative) before and after the Second World War.

Even White Australia, which was not formally abandoned until 1966, was part of the "protection all round" mentality. Its essential rationale was to keep hard-working Chinese, Japanese, Kanaks, and others out of the Australian labor market. As Alfred Deakin said in the early 1900s, the Japanese had "to be excluded because of their high abilities."

Australia muddled through most of the twentieth century on the back of its enormous natural wealth. Predominantly a British and Irish society, it benefited substantially from the post–World War II immigration program which saw many hard-working Europeans and, later, Asians arrive on its shores. But by then the policy decisions enacted at the turn of the century were well set in place.

Finally, reality asserted itself—as it invariably does. Australia was hit hard indeed by the international recessions of 1974-75 and 1982-83, and especially so by the current economic downturn, which Paul Keating described as the recession Australia "had to have." Since the early 1980s, there has been a growing recognition on both sides of the political fence that "protection all round" had to be junked—and soon.

The first deregulatory moves were made by John Howard, who was treasurer for most of 1976–1983 when the Liberal government of Malcolm Fraser held office. The pace of change was increased by the Hawke Labor government and, in particular, by Paul Keating. Following its election in March 1983, the Labor government pursued economic rationalism with a vengeance. It deregulated the excessively controlled financial system, allowed overseas banks to operate freely, and floated the Australian dollar. In March of this year Hawke announced the virtual dismantling of protection. However, the Labor government, which has long-standing historical and organizational links with the trade-union movement, has been reluctant to abandon Australia's unique centralized industrial-relations system.

The opposition Liberal Party (in American terms, the conservative party) is busy calling for faster and more substantial reforms of shipping, ports, railways, etc. But the Liberals have something of a credibility problem, because in their past periods in office they have done little or nothing to revamp the industrial-relations system or to deregulate the economy. The current Liberal leader, John Hewson, and the Liberal industrial-relations spokesman, John Howard, now promise to make up for the conservative policy malaise of the past.

These days there is considerable pessimism Down Under, as would be expected in a country experiencing a severe recession along with rising unemployment and excessive foreign debt. Furthermore, unlike the United States and most of Western Europe, Australia did not contain inflation in the 1980s. However, there is some good news on the horizon. Inflation has recently dropped to under 5 per cent and could go lower by the end of 1991. This now makes it at least theoretically possible for Australia to enjoy low inflation and economic growth at the same time—something which had not seemed possible for over two decades.

A competitive, low-inflation Australian economy possessed of natural wealth and a vibrant tourist industry is capable of a top-level economic performance once again. It will, however, take time and continued political courage. Australians are hoping that the resignation of Paul Keating—and the fact that Prime Minister Hawke now depends on Labor's left wing for his political survival—does not result in the junking of the reform agenda and a hankering for the economic insularity that Keating led his country out of. So far the new treasurer, John Kerin, has indicated that he will hold the line. □

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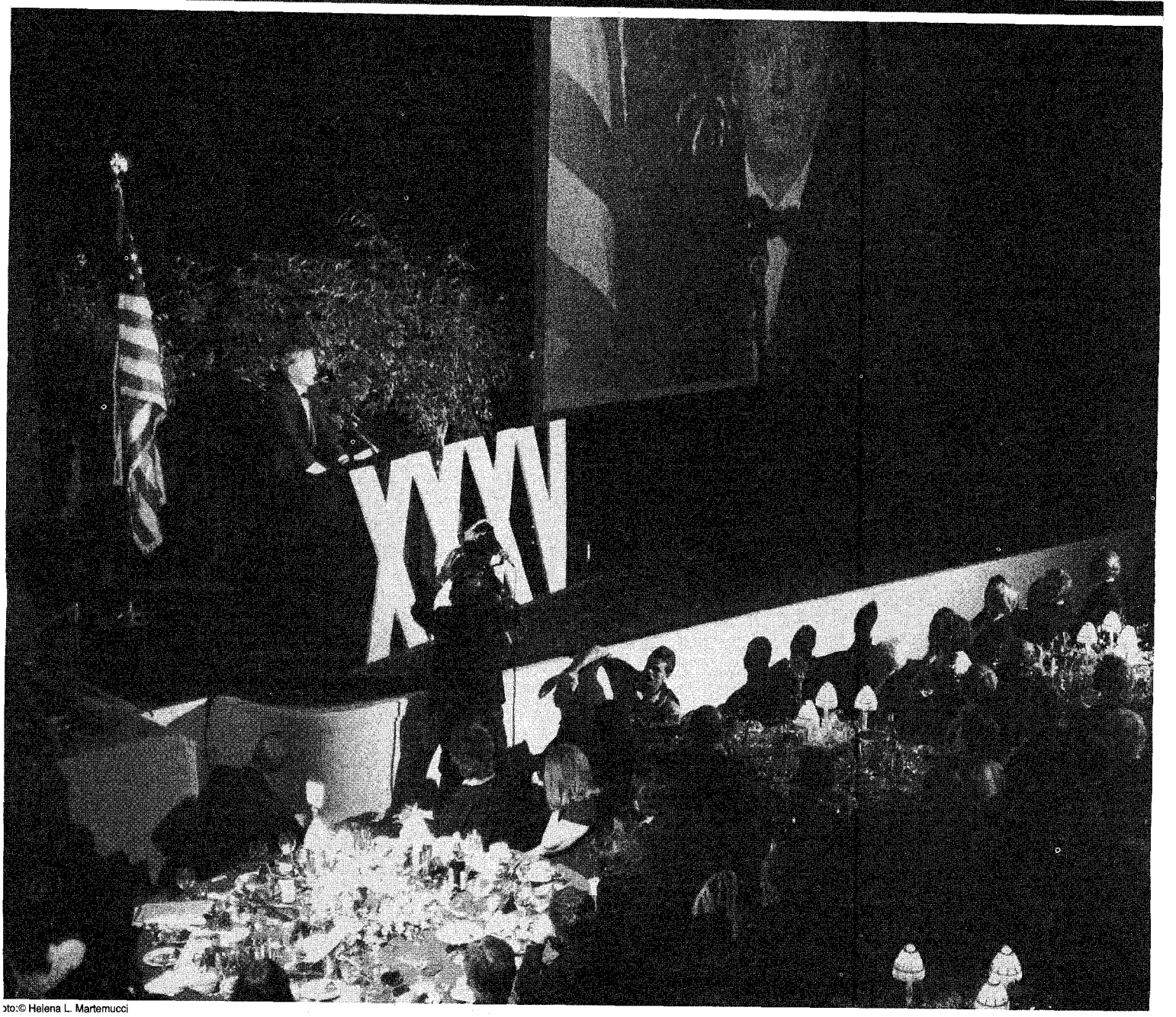
A Party This Good Should L



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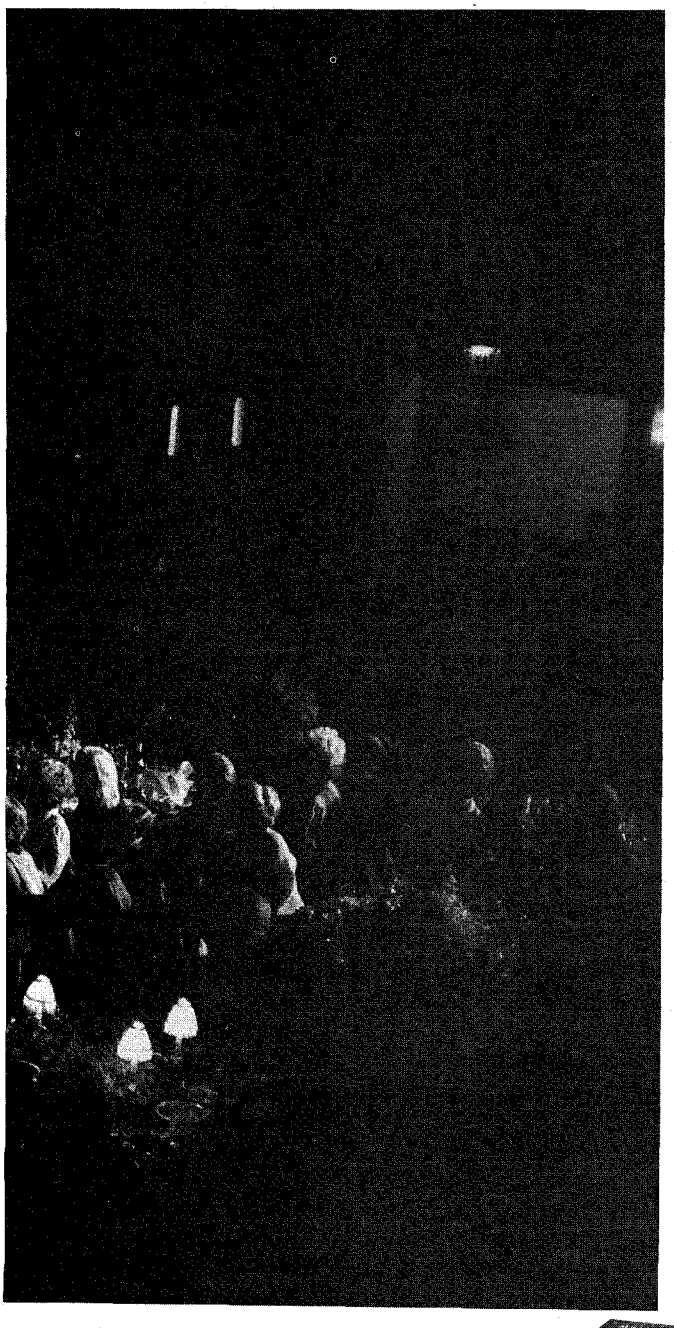
A Long Time!



Helena L. Martemucci

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✥

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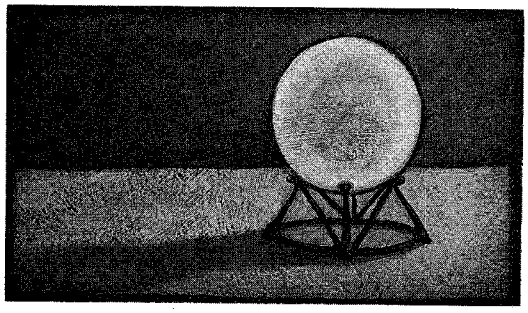
THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME



National Review asked five distinguished conservatives to muse about what the future may hold—politically, socially, economically, technologically—as we approach the end of a century and a millennium.

Irwin M. Stelzer

AMERICANS appear to have made two fundamental decisions about their future. One should depress conservatives, the other cheer them.

We seem to have ignored conservative wisdom and, instead, left social policy to the bad guys. Welfare schemes that guarantee a permanently dependent underclass are now thoroughly embedded in our political and social life. Neither the intellect of Charles Murray nor the energy of Jack Kemp can cope with the grim determination of ghetto politicians to hold their constituents in thrall by denying them incentives to work and to establish normal family lives; by insulating them from pressures to use our language and otherwise enter the American mainstream; and by blaming the lethal nature of street life on the police rather than on the dealers and muggers.

These malignancies, and others like them, might, of course, be excised from the body politic. But that would mean enduring short-term pain in exchange for long-term gain—something our political system is not organized to do. There is simply no constituency for it. The apparent beneficiaries of the welfare system (in fact, its victims) can't do without their transfer-payment "fix"; the dispensers of the welfare narcotic, fearing redundancy if those clients kick the habit, dole out enough money to retain control; the great majority crinkles up its nose, moves to the suburbs, and contents itself with a tax revolt that is negated by huge budget deficits.

The good news is that a country as vast and diverse as ours takes a lot of killing. And, because of another, happier choice, it is likely to thrive, although the benefits of that prosperity may be denied to a minority by that group's putative benefactors.

This happy choice has been to stick with a free-market economy, to reject the Reich–Kuttner–Dukakis plea for a centrally managed economy, the Gephardt drive for a gutting of the world's free trading system, and the populist move (lately abetted by Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady) to turn the Federal Reserve system into an engine of permanent inflation. True, we do not always walk the straight and narrow: we protect this or that industry, subsidize mostly rich farmers at the expense of consumers, bail out Chrysler, and institutionalize sloth by refusing to privatize the postal system. But basically we hold to the notion that markets provide surer and more enduring cures for our ills than do bureaucrats. As a result, the crises of the late 1980s and early 1990s will soon be dim memories.

Consider, first, the so-called Third World debt crisis and the talk of the collapse of Latin American economies. Fortunately, the U.S. banks were unable to persuade a market-oriented Reagan Administration to bail them and their debtors out. The result in Latin America has been privatization to relieve the drain on resources created by overmanned state monopolies, removal of trade barriers so that imports can compete with overpriced domestic goods, and a generation of politicians beginning to see that markets, not ministers, can deliver prosperity. It all bodes well.

Then there is the related banking crisis. Billions in loans to Third World countries, and a wave of lending to energy companies prospecting for $100-a-barrel oil and real-estate companies eager to build empty office buildings and shopping malls, laid the banks low. Write-offs soared and profits plunged.

Again, we had a Reagan policy of, "Don't do some-

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thing, just stand there," to thank for a solution. Banks wrote down loans. Shareholders lost money. Prices of bank stocks fell—until they reached a level that attracted new capital into the system. And bureaucracies were reduced, to the point where 87 per cent of America's 12,340 commercial banks turned a profit last year.

So, too, with the trade deficit. Freely fluctuating exchange rates, the bane of economic planners, brought the dollar to levels that contributed to an export boom. The trade deficit—centrists' standard excuse for subsidizing some industries and technologies, and protecting others—is withering away.

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That should put paid to the argument that America is becoming non-competitive, a manufacturing giant shriveling into a nation of hamburger flippers. In fact, the nation's factories now account for 23.2 per cent of America's GNP, up from the 20 per cent postwar low in 1982 and equal to the level of output in the 1960s, when American industrial prowess was taken for granted.

Since most people are more pragmatic than ideological, and since conservative economic policies work, they should continue to sweep the field. □

George Gilder

IN RECENT months, conservatives have been celebrating the feats of computer technology in war. In coming years, however, we will be able to use computer technology to blow away our enemies in the media and the schools as effectively as in the Persian Gulf. A cautious projection of current trends suggests that, within a decade or so, many of the multi-million-dollar computer powers displayed in the war will be available in home appliances costing a few hundred dollars. Compounding this gain in computers, the movement of fiber optics into homes and offices will bring a similar millionfold advance in communications.

I am a conservative. I think secular culture is an irredeemable fiasco; estranged from God as the source of all truth and beauty, art rots to triviality and evil. Nonetheless, I believe that this culture has produced one incomparable achievement, scaled a summit as beautiful and true as any Gothic cathedral. That pinnacle is its technology.

Mostly based on the microchip—a weave of wires and switches as complex as a street map of America, covering a sliver of silicon the size of a thumbnail—this supreme technology is entirely a product of conservative values. Yet most conservatives today still fail to benefit from it. Many of us send our children to secular schools that disdain our deepest values, leave students inept to compete in a global economy, waste classroom time on the "profound" ecological and religious "insights" of Sioux sages, and devotedly teach the digital skills of putting a condom on a banana. Some of us dispatch our teenagers to private schools, at some $20,000 per year, that cannot even save their students from sex, porn, and drugs. Many of us send, or hope to send, our children to universities such as Harvard and Yale, which are the festering heart of the surrounding darkness. At night, most of us watch "news" programs and other television "entertainments" that are created by socialists and other levelers chiefly as propaganda for more government power. Or we watch movies full of sexual hedonism, violence, and evil, and disdainful of the ethic of work, family, and faith that makes all civilization possible.

Playing to the prurient interests and morbid fears of mass audiences is the forte of liberal broadcasters everywhere. Conservatives make lousy panders. But the new computer and communications technology will render broadcasting obsolete. As in the current world of magazines and books, works will chiefly succeed by appealing to special interests and aspirations rather than couch-potato cravings. Within the next decade it will be possible for all of us to have fully interactive "telecomputers" in our homes that can cheaply receive, process, and store digital video images from virtually any classroom, library, church, laboratory, museum, sports event, television station, theater, or database in the world. On high-resolution screens far superior to classrooms, theaters, and chalkboards, you will be able to summon the best teachers and professors, preachers and performers, doctors and writers in the world at any time you wish. Using the same computers, you will also be able cheaply to originate and transmit programs of your own. With millions of available channels rather than the current hundreds, you will be able to form markets and alliances with others who share your tastes and beliefs anywhere on the globe.

By the very law of the microcosm from which it springs, computer power favors individuals against every top-down establishment and bureaucracy, from the centralized school and factory to the centralized nation-state. Just as multi-national corporations can now range the world for workers and capital—avoiding the taxes and regulations of inhospitable countries—in coming years you will be able to escape the constraints

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of time and place and media power in most of your cultural and economic life.

Crucial to these gains, however, is unleashing the phone companies to install fiber optics in every home, as the phone company in Japan plans to do. Media opponents offer a seductive Luddism, sentimental statism, and TV communalism that appeal to some conservatives, who still see technological progress as a force of the Left. The key to the coming triumph of conservatism will be how vigorously conservatives support the mostly American technological forces that they made possible through their defense of the traditional culture of capitalism. □

Norman Macrae

THE 1980s surge of radical conservatism—led by that improbable pair, Reagan and Thatcher—swelled from a sensible recognition which will keep recurring, namely, that it is hopelessly inefficient to let politicians spend so much of our money for us. Any factory in Omsk eventually becomes less than one-sixth as efficient per manhour and per ruble as any Western factory that changes all the time to compete in free markets. The realization is about to dawn that the services provided by public monopolies in the West operate at a similar under-one-sixth of potential productivity. This applies to education, crime prevention, environmental protection, welfare services, even currently admired defenses (far too expensive a steamroller half-crushed that little Saddam nut). The task of conservatives will be to keep introducing competition into all these services, imposing one main rule: If somebody introduces a better or cheaper way of tackling a problem, it must bring the innovator a lot of money. At present, in public monopolies, it brings him his colleagues' fury and pique.

The nastiest politicians spending too much of GNP (Communists, Third World dictators) spend most of it on their armies, their secret police, and themselves. The nicest (called liberals in America, social democrats in Europe and Japan) genuinely thought that spending by them would make things better for the poor. Instead, and inevitably, they have created a permanent drug-crippled, crime-crucified underclass. Although about 13 per cent of Americans are still below the poverty line, the best sociologists show that an American has under 1 per cent danger of staying long in poverty provided he or she does three things: gets and stays married, completes high school, stays more than a year in his or her first job even if at the minimum wage. Anti-poverty policy must turn to incentives for such actions.

America may face two dangers during this march to common sense. One is that Christianity, which in Europe is too much based on a pity ethic, might in America come to be too self-righteous. The other is America's absurd political system, which ensures a congressman re-election if he arranges for a lot of federal money to be spent on his constituents: i.e., if he turns his constituency into an Omsk.

Fortunately, North America's Third World hinterland (Latin America and probably the Caribbean) is entering a better patch, while Western Europe's hinterland enters a disappointing one. The two religions to the European Community's south and east (Islam and socialism) are fearfully unsuitable for modern times. Islam is at present the same 14-plus centuries from the birth of its Prophet as Christianity was from the birth of Jesus at the time of Torquemada's Inquisition. It looks it.

We Western Europeans have long known that East-

The nastiest politicians spend money on their armies, their secret police, and themselves. The nicest genuinely thought spending by them would make things better for the poor.

ern European Communism would not outlast this century. The question was: Would it be replaced by a free-market system that could quickly make it six times richer, as West Germany and Japan became after 1945, or by an overnationalist and hyperinflationary mess like the one that crippled South America in its lost century after Bolívar? The ex-Comms are going post-Bolívar. Much blame lies on Helmut Kohl, the conservative dummy of the past decade. Kohl found it vote-winning to convert one D-Mark for one Ostmark, at a time when markets showed the Ostmark was worth only about one-sixth a D-Mark. He is now amazed that more and more East Germans become unemployed, because they have to be paid six times what their present production is worth. The rest of the EC thinks it will stabilize best if it anchors its currencies to the German Mark, which will be as stabilizing as being anchored to an electric eel.

From Japan and its hinterland has come the most dramatic, but unnoticed, recent event. Japanese-run factories in (e.g.) Thailand now suddenly have as high a productivity and (more important) quality control as Japanese factories back home in Osaka, at maybe one-fifth of the labor costs. Manufacture of virtually all transportable and thus exportable goods will move to Third World countries, especially East Asia as vast India and China enter the mass of manufacturing mankind. Because they had few birth-control pills in the 1970s, Third World countries have a vast population of newly literate twenty-year-olds, all eager to work with their hands; while Japan, America, and Europe have fewer twenty-year-olds, most of them wanting to work with their brains.

The logical split becomes: Third World manufacturing countries, First World brainworkers. That sets the

Mr. Macrae is former deputy editor of The Economist.

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First World a horrendous problem: Who does our menial jobs? Either a) our own uneducated youths (a host, thanks to failed public education) and less-educated grandpas, or b) more immigrants. Japan will pass its junk jobs to its grandpas; Europe and America will slip into more immigration. Japan (even though going into an America-like trade deficit) will prosper better, even if it does not deserve to. □

Jude Wanniski

FIRST, to distinguish between "populist conservatives" and "conservative elitists," I associate the former with Jefferson, the latter with Hamilton. The former is more democratic, the latter more republican. Jefferson is associated with aspirations, the realization of unfulfilled potential; Hamilton is identified with the protection of already realized potential. Civilization improves itself by refining the mechanisms that balance these legitimate, competing interests.

In the next phase of civilization's march, which should carry us well into the next century, conservative populists should work on the concept that *the poor have to be allowed to become rich*. That is, people naturally try to improve themselves, and if government does not interfere with their efforts, many will eventually succeed. This is not a libertarian formulation, for it does not necessarily argue for less government. There is plenty for government to do, as long as it does not actively suppress individual potential.

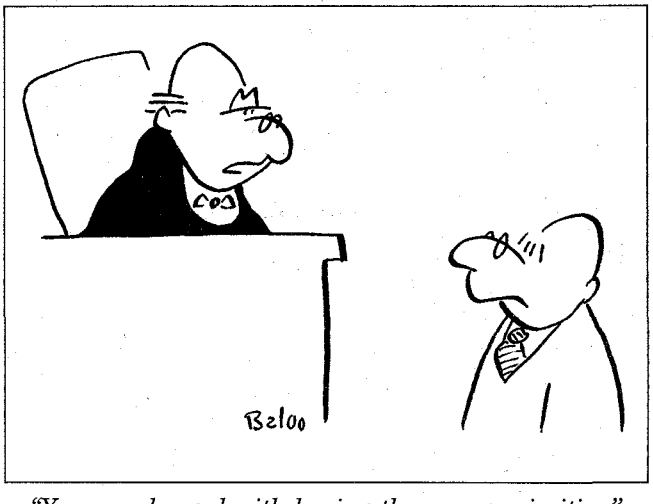
All varieties of conservatives understand that government cannot make the poor rich in any meaningful way. It can, though, frustrate the efforts of the young, and of aspiring blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities. Inflation hurts these people the most, cheating them out of their savings as they try to put together money for school or to start a business. Taxing labor excessively damages capital. In the same way, the taxation of capital gains hurts most the people who have most of their gains in front of them, not the old or the wealthy, who have most of their gains behind them. Government must allow the poor to become rich, by not taxing away the fruits of enterprise in confiscatory fashion.

The family is the most important engine of growth, as parents pass on their intellectual capital to their sons and daughters. Government must not interfere by rewarding those families that break up, but must rather provide incentives for families to hold together. When government gives gifts to the poor on the condition that they remain poor, this stands in the way of their becoming rich. Success comes through failure—repeated failure. In life, as more clearly in sports, trying again and again to reach a goal, failing, but failing less and less with each attempt, produces achievement. The opportunity to fail is the opportunity to succeed.

Both American political parties have elements of both Jefferson and Hamilton. Both have establishment wings and entrepreneurial wings, although the entrepreneurial wing of the Democratic Party has been moribund since the death of John Kennedy. Presidents Nixon and Ford represented the establishment wing of the GOP, President Reagan the entrepreneurial wing. President Bush—who is both a Connecticut Yankee and a Texas wildcatter—embodies elements of both. In each party, the establishment wing concentrates on protecting its turf against new competition at home and competition from abroad. The entrepreneurial wing is both international and evangelical, wishing to spread the message of dynamic, competitive capitalism.

The work of the populist conservative in the next generation is to strengthen the entrepreneurial wings of both parties. Corporate socialists have dominated American political thinking for the last half-century. The promise of the twenty-first century is the promise of democratic entrepreneurial capitalism, extending to the inner cities of the United States, the developing nations of the Third World, and the rebuilding nations of the former Eastern bloc. As President Reagan put it in his 1980 acceptance speech in Detroit: "We have got to move ahead, but we cannot leave anyone behind." □

Mr. Wanniski is president of Polyconomics, Inc., and author of The Way the World Works.



"You are charged with having the wrong priorities."

Charles Murray

IT MAKES SENSE to be a little schizophrenic about the American future. Much is positive, whether one thinks about the future personally (George Gilder's vision of the post-television age sounds like wonderful fun) or politically (technology is going to give the centralized state a very tough time). But there is a dark side looming.

The dark side flows from a prediction that in itself seems innocuous: As national wealth grows in the coming years, so will the proportion of people who are rich. I use "rich" roughly, referring generally to discretionary income. People who are rich have a lot of it.

To get an overall idea of the breadth of the trend to date, consider that, as of the end of the Korean War,

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using constant 1988 dollars, less than one family in fifty thousand had an income of $100,000 or more. By 1988, almost four families per *hundred* had an income that great. This is a phenomenally large change.

The numbers of the rich will tend to grow more rapidly in the coming years. Several factors lead to this conclusion, principally the increasing monetary value of cognitive skills, meaning a combination of ability and training for complex mental work. This trend has been in evidence for some time. In 1980, for example, a male college graduate made about 30 per cent more than a male high-school graduate. By 1988, he made about 60 per cent more. In just eight years, the premium for a college degree doubled—in comparison with a high-school diploma. The comparison with people who didn't even graduate from high school is starker yet.

In coming years, the price for first-rate cognitive skills will skyrocket, for reasons involving the nature of changes in technology (constantly more complex at the leading edge), politics (constantly creating more complicated laws with more complicated loopholes), and the size of the stakes (when a percentage point of market share is worth hundreds of millions of dollars, then the people who can help you get that extra percentage point are worth very large incomes). Meanwhile, real wages for low-skill jobs will increase slowly if at all, and efforts to increase wages artificially (by raising the minimum wage, for example) will backfire because the demand for low-skill labor is becoming more elastic as alternatives to human labor become numerous and affordable.

The net result is that the rich are going to constitute a major chunk of the population in the relatively near future, and this group will increasingly be the most talented. Why be depressed by this prospect, which in many ways sounds like a good thing? Because I fear its potential for producing something very like a caste society, with the implication of utter social separation that goes with that most un-American of words.

Briefly, I am trying to envision what happens when 10 or 20 per cent of the population has enough income to bypass the social institutions it doesn't like in ways that only the top fraction of 1 per cent used to be able to do. Robert Reich has called it the "secession of the successful." The current symbol of this phenomenon is the gated community. But there are many other straws in the wind. A simple example is the way that the fax, modem, and Federal Express have already made the U.S. Postal Service nearly irrelevant to the way some segments of American society communicate. A more portentous example is the mass exodus from public schools among urban elites. I sympathize with many of the reasons why people with money take these steps. For almost three decades now, government has failed miserably to perform its basic functions, from preserving order in public spaces to dispensing justice to providing decent education in its schools. But the reasonableness of the motives does not diminish the danger of the potential consequences.

As this American caste system takes shape, American conservatism is going to have to wrestle with its soul. Is conservatism going to follow the Latin American model, where to be conservative means to preserve the mansions on the hills above the slums? Or is it going to remain true to its American heritage, where the thing-to-be-conserved has not been primarily money or privilege but a distinctively American way of self-government and limited government?

All the forces that I can discern will tend to push American conservatism toward the Latin American model. For example: Conservatives are now being joined by defectors from urban liberalism who have been mugged—sometimes figuratively, often literally. These new conservatives are not fans of either Russell Kirk or Milton Friedman. Their political agenda is weighted heavily toward taking care of number one, using big government to do so whenever it suits their purposes. More broadly, the culture of the urban underclass, increasingly violent and bizarre, fosters alienation. As each new social experiment fails to diminish the size of the underclass, our increasing national wealth will make it tempting to bypass the problem by treating the inner city as an urban analogue of the Indian reservation.

Our increasing national wealth will make it tempting to bypass the problem of the underclass by treating the inner city as an urban analogue of the Indian reservation.

This temptation will be augmented by the increasing power of people at the upper end of the income scale to use government for their own ends. If the rich constitute 10 to 20 per cent of the population, their political power will be so immense as to transform the power equation. The Left has been complaining for years that the rich have too much power. They ain't seen nothing yet.

It will be sadly ironic if the politics of caste are called "conservative," for the greatest bulwarks against the power of privilege are some good old-fashioned American conservative principles. Enforce strict equality of individuals before the law. Prohibit the state from favoring groups, including rich and influential groups. Decentralize government authority to the smallest possible unit. None of these principles is a panacea, for the forces that will tend to produce an American caste system are powerful and complex. But these classic conservative principles are more needed than ever, at a time when the seductions for conservatives to abandon them are increasing. □

Mr. Murray, a Bradley Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of Losing Ground *and* In Pursuit: Of Happiness and Good Government.

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From Jazz to Rap

THEY HAD A RIGHT TO SING THE BLUES

As blacks' social and economic circumstances have improved, their music has taken a nosedive. American culture at large has abetted the decline, and suffered from it.

TOM BETHELL

IT'S DIFFICULT to go to a large music store these days without being bombarded by this insistent doggerel called rap music. "I could do that when I was ten years old," said Ray Charles, capturing in his comment the mood of triumphant mockery that characterizes rap. As in a bad dream, words and phrases turn over and repeat restlessly. At times we seem to be in the midst of a convention of imps hopping about on pogo sticks.

Some are eager to deny that this is decadence. Invoking the Progressive Myth as though we had not heard it a thousand times, a *New York Times* editorial writer found something very familiar in these sounds: the history of music has been one of "innovative, even outrageous styles" that eventually "became mainstream." And so it will be, no doubt, with rap. (Beethoven, too, wasn't appreciated in his own day.) *Newsweek* referred to rap as "the next evolutionary step."

I'm not here concerned about the immorality of what used to be called the "lyrics," or the general air of triumphant badness. It is the musical decline, reflecting a more general change in the culture, that concerns me here. How are we to account for it?

The evidence of this decline is readily at hand. "Next to the nettle lies the rose," and next to rap there lies, in the music-store racks, a great treasure trove of American music, reissued on compact disc. The "hot" collectors of the 1930s would be dumfounded: their long-sought "wants" on such labels as Okeh and Vocalion not only copiously available but complete, in many cases, with second takes, unissued masters, and archival photographs.

Musical Paradise Regained

WE'VE HEARD about the Robert Johnson reissue, with every known take of this Mississippi Delta blues singer recently released by Columbia. It sold 325,000 copies and made the *Billboard* charts. What I want to draw attention to here is a new issue of (I believe) even greater musical merit, which has so far received no attention. I refer to some recordings made in 1944 by the great trumpeter Bunk Johnson and the clarinetist George Lewis, in an old dance hall in New Orleans. The sessions (which lasted for a week) were recorded by William Russell, as it happens one of those old "hot" collectors himself. Now 86, and living in New Orleans, Russell has been supervising the release of the material.

Bunk Johnson was discovered in the late 1930s when a number of people did the first research into early jazz history. Several New Orleans musicians said that Bunk had been among the best trumpeters in the early days. He had "the most beautiful tone, the best imagination," Louis Armstrong said. It turned out that Bunk, then 59, was working in a rice mill in New Iberia, Louisiana. He claimed he could still play. The story of his being equipped with false teeth and a new trumpet has been often told.

The band that Russell brought together to play with Bunk was probably the best then available in New Orleans. The drummer, Baby Dodds, was brought down from Chicago, where he had earlier recorded with Armstrong. Columbia's famous talent scout, John Hammond, who signed up everyone from Bessie Smith to Count Basie to Bob Dylan, happened to be in New Orleans that summer. He heard about Russell's session and showed up one night as the band was playing. He remarked to Russell that these would be the best recordings ever made in the city. Time proved Hammond right. Nothing since has come close.

Russell returned to New Orleans the following year and recorded more bands, including a brass band with Bunk, and a great session with the old-time trumpeter Wooden Joe Nicholas and Albert Burbank, the clarinetist much admired by Woody Allen.

However, few people ever heard these wonderful recordings. Finally, in 1988, Russell concluded that the time was right, and he sold them to a local record producer (Audiophile, 1206 De-

Mr. Bethell, an NR *contributing editor, is Washington correspondent for* The American Spectator.

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catur, New Orleans, La. 70116). Recently I spent some time with Russell in New Orleans, and he told me that one of the things that encouraged him to sell was the quality of sound on compact discs.

Three CDs have been issued ($15 each), two of Bunk at his best, and the third including perhaps the best George Lewis sides ever recorded ("High Society," "Ice Cream," "Burgundy Street Blues," and others).

From Bunk to Junk

IN FIFTY YEARS, the history of jazz uncannily recapitulated the history of European music: from classical to avant garde, with an intermediate romantic phase. With Bunk's band the idiom is classical, yet amazingly relaxed. Trumpet, trombone, and clarinet create an interweaving polyphony comparable in complexity to parts of the Brandenburg Concertos. In the long, nine-minute "Midnight Blues" Jim Robinson's glissando and George Lewis's poignant soaring provide a nonchalant counterpoint to Bunk's endlessly inventive melodic line. I don't know anything else quite like it in American music. But Bunk, always ready with a putdown for those who admired the Art of it, cruelly remarked as it ended: "There's a record Bill Colburn is going to put under his arm and carry all over San Francisco." One of his greatest admirers, Colburn had put Bunk up in his apartment the year before.

Bunk, nonetheless, had unerring musical taste. Hearing him in San Francisco in 1943, the composer Virgil Thomson wrote in the *Herald Tribune*: "Bunk is an artist of delicate imagination, meditative in style rather than flashy, and master of the darkest trumpet tone I have ever heard." His tone and "his melodic invention are at all times expressive, at all times reasonable, and at all times completely interesting. His work takes on, in consequence, depth, ease, and lucidity. Nothing could be less sentimental, or speak more seriously from the heart."

In a new and excellent book about Preservation Hall, the writer and photographer William Carter points out the irony that when these recordings were made the local studios refused to record blacks. So Russell did the job himself, capturing with a single microphone these "old black men" sitting "in rickety chairs in old wooden halls that possessed a beautiful natural resonance." Many have since felt, he adds, that "those resonant woods and cavernous, humid spaces provided an ideal sonority for the stripped-down, spacious sounds, which seemed to evoke days beyond recall."

The only word I disagree with is "old." Bunk (who died in 1949) was admittedly 63 when these recordings were made, but Lewis was 44, and the rest of the band in either their forties or their early fifties. They were no doubt in their prime. But at the time, Russell later remarked, jazzmen were thought of as equivalent to baseball players: their legs gave out at forty.

Years later I went to live in New Orleans. Preservation Hall had recently opened, and a remnant from the great earlier period played there. The music had declined considerably, however. George Lewis & Co. went through their paces, but the creative spark had gone. Mere routine survived. I spent some time with Lewis (who died in 1968) and wrote a book about him. He never analyzed the music he played—didn't even have his own records in the house. The contrapuntal style of the New Orleans tradition? George either didn't know what you were talking about or pretended not to. He and the other musicians thought of music in wholly functional terms. Music was something that was "furnished"—for weddings, funerals, and dances. Such notions as "black culture" were too abstract by half. Then, trying to please, he would tell you about a musician he *did* admire . . . and it would be someone he had just heard on the Johnny Carson show.

The Moving Spotlight

THE WHOLE history of American music has been one of abrupt appearance, followed by decline—almost the opposite of "evolution." Mysteriously, an energetic spotlight of creativity is focused at a point. It diffuses and wanes. Then (until recently?) it has equally mysteriously reappeared somewhere else. Around 1900 there was an explosive burst of creativity, with the simultaneous and geographically separate appearance of jazz, blues, and ragtime. I agree with Russell Banks's observation, in his recent essay on Robert Johnson, that the blues "suddenly appeared in a specific region in a fully articulated and evolved form." The same was true of jazz in New Orleans. There's no evidence of an antecedent, "primitive" period. The earliest jazzmen could read music. It was the later ones who didn't bother to learn.

Within the lifetime of some of its earliest practitioners, the jazz tradition, like the European one before it, succumbed to an experimental avant garde. Every new experiment was praised by critics who noted that European innovators, too, had "freed" music from its shackles. (But they failed to note its subsequent decline.) In 1945 Louis Armstrong remarked that bebop, then the rage in New York, was "filled with malice," a daring criticism. The music had degenerated into empty displays of technique.

But the decline didn't matter, because new forms appeared; the spotlight moved on. They may not have had the sophistication of Jelly Roll Morton, but Jimmy Yancey and Meade Lux Lewis were playing some wonderful boogie-woogie piano in Chicago. Guitars were electrified, and soon there was another, although lesser, peak with the performances of blues singers like John Lee Hooker in the late Fifties. The music was popularized in Memphis, prettified in Liverpool, and presented, finally, by Ed Sullivan.

The English groups who played before mass audiences in the Sixties and Seventies were candid enough to feature the bands whose recordings they had faithfully imitated. But the musicians so honored—B. B. King and Howlin' Wolf, for example—were rapidly reduced by the exposure to a stale repertoire of mannerisms. Here we come to something that has been peculiar to American music. It is almost a law that the early recordings of a given musician will turn out to be his best. There are exceptions, but mostly we find this familiar pattern of discovery, peak, and prolonged decline. The market may be the problem. Old hits are demanded by new audiences, so that crowd-pleasing tricks are repeated *ad nauseam*. Resort to the tried-and-true guarantees a certain success, but artistic maturation must have been thwarted time and again as a result. George Lewis may have been fortunate not to be discovered until his forties.

The market has also made possible

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the constant renewal of American music. There was always a way out of the cul de sac, sparing us the European fate of a dead form ruled by an academy. Just when one style was beginning to suffer from overexposure or die of tedium, something new and unexpected would appear. Well into the 1970s, one heard it through the grapevine, Marvin Gaye and others were producing some wonderful stuff in Motown. That, too, will live—on disc.

Listening for the Sound

WHAT'S happening now? Not much, I fear; a matter for concern if we regard the genius of American popular music as a proxy for the vitality of society as a whole. In particular there doesn't seem to be much from the black community, other than this hip-hopping. Maybe I'm missing something important, and I hope so. I twist the radio dial in search of some new burst of energy (and it would be easy to recognize, contrary to the easy assumption of bourgeois insensibility). Wynton Marsalis, a young trumpeter from New Orleans, was praised in a *Time* cover story. I bought a couple of his albums but what I heard was lugubrious cocktail-lounge noodling in the expressionless tone patented by Miles Davis.

If we use foreign taste as a fairly reliable listening post, Nashville may now be the most important center of American musical influence. Which seems reasonable to my ears. Country music never soars to the heights, but it doesn't descend to the depths either. Mostly it's fair-to-middling stuff—amiable without being soul-stirring. Reba McEntire and Waylon Jennings aim to please, and they never resort to aural ugliness as an attention-getting device. Country music, of course, is white.

Jazz is sometimes represented as a black art form, but it is more accurate to think of it as American. As with ragtime, its earliest practitioners were both black and white. But the best ones were black—to an overwhelming extent. How are we to explain this? It was not a superiority of musicianship. The mellifluous cornetist Bix Beiderbecke, the leading white jazzman of the "classical" period, was technically the superior of Louis Armstrong, but Louis was the greater player, for artistic reasons that are as hard to deny as they are to define.

No doubt a measure of adversity and tension with his environment is advantageous to the creative artist. Without it, he may get along perfectly well without the subterfuges of art. The blues contain much aesthetically coded protest, making the music seem to express private sorrow, not potential insurrection. The coding also enables us to enjoy the blues today purely as music, and it ensures that others will still be doing so a hundred years from now. Protest songs from the civil-rights movement face a less certain future. Mahalia Jackson was a great gospel singer in the 1940s and '50s. Artistically, she did not survive co-optation by the civil-rights movement.

If people are too comfortable, the creative juices are unlikely to flow. No doubt this is another reason why, so often, commercial success has been followed by artistic decline—for whites as well as blacks. A really big commercial success will bring with it a permanent change, possibly a disorienting one. Listen to Fats Domino, probably the most successful vocalist from New Orleans since World War II. His early records have a very appealing, lightly lilting quality. One can see why he became a big hit. Then came the golden discs and Las Vegas—forget it.

Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University

Bunk Johnson

The level of adversity encountered by blacks in New Orleans was noticeable but not disabling. They were better off than most people in most centuries. Compared to most Irishmen in the nineteenth century, for example, most black musicians in New Orleans lived in comfort, even in the "Jim Crow" years. They had musical instruments, the leisure to learn how to play them, music teachers to patronize, social clubs they could join, and above all an economy productive enough to keep literally hundreds of them in work. Is a man oppressed if he can support himself and his family by going off to work every day—clarinet in hand (as George Lewis did in the 1920s)? Tell it to the ditch-digger. When I asked Lewis about segregation, incidentally, what still rankled with him was the memory of discrimination at the hands of light-skinned blacks—so-called "Creoles of color." They had their own social clubs, and sometimes George was hired to play at them. "They would look at you hard if your hair wasn't silky," he recalled.

Not that this should be construed as an argument for adversity. In return for an end to segregation, George Lewis and the others would have gladly surrendered any artistic residue; especially as they didn't recognize its existence.

The most erroneous idea about popular culture is that we can subtract the all-important functional setting (the dance, wedding, funeral) that gave purpose to the original creation, and still somehow preserve these distilled aesthetic drops in the cultural centers: art furnished for art's sake, with the help of educational programs, community input, "outreach," national endowments, and dedicated funds. It won't work.

San Jacinto Hall, where the Bunk Johnson recordings were made, survived until 1967. Then it was torn down as part of an urban-renewal program. A cultural center was to replace it. "Louis Armstrong Park," it was called. When I was in New Orleans recently I thought I might go there; it is only a block from William Russell's apartment. But I was told that it is not safe, even in daytime. And when I left Russell's apartment late one night, after he had played me some of those beautiful old recordings, some of which will be coming out on later CDs (there may be as many as 12), he gave me a little palm-of-the-hand tear-gas container to carry—just to be on the safe side. □

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UNILATERAL REVISIONISM

ARMS NON-AGREEMENTS

FRANK J. GAFFNEY JR.

THREE WEEKS AGO, the foreign ministers of the United States and the Soviet Union reached an agreement on the terms of a treaty governing conventional forces in Europe (CFE). This achievement is being hailed as a momentous step for arms control. And so it is—but not necessarily a positive one. What it amounts to is a renegotiation of a multi-national agreement by two of the parties to that agreement.

The original CFE treaty was signed in Paris last November 19, and the Soviets immediately set about unilaterally rewriting it. Indeed, the ink was scarcely dry before the Soviet Union submitted suspicious data concerning its forces within the affected Urals-to-the-Atlantic zone. To the amazement of the other 21 parties to the accord, the Soviets blithely asserted that several thousand tanks, armored personnel carriers, and artillery pieces clearly covered by the treaty were exempt from its limitations. These units, Moscow claimed, had been "resubordinated" from assignments with line army units and attached to naval-infantry, coastal-defense, and strategic-rocket forces. As a result, according to the USSR, they could be retained within the treaty zone without requiring the Soviets to draw down other forces so as to remain within the agreement's limits.

The issue was not simply the numbers. After all, a few thousand tanks and other pieces of equipment retained illegally is small potatoes compared to what Moscow had done just before the CFE treaty was signed; the Soviets removed over seventy thousand treaty-limited items from the zone, thus preserving these assets—whether to support external aggression, internal repression, or Soviet foreign policy through overseas military sales remains to be seen.

Swallowing the Camel

SINCE OUR ALLIES were not about to complain about even so gross a circumvention, most of them saw no reason to haggle about the smaller violation. The Bush Administration, however, knew that it would be difficult to obtain Senate approval of a treaty that was being openly violated by the Soviet Union. Although the United States has continued to adhere to several accords that Moscow has breached, even avid CFE supporters like Senator Joe Biden (D., Del.) balked at flacking for an accord that was violated even before it obtained the Senate's approval.

Unfortunately, rather than simply demand unconditional Soviet adherence to the treaty's terms, the Administration entered into what amounted to new, bilateral negotiations. For seven months, the two sides wrangled over arrangements that would save face for Gorbachev & Company while permitting Washington to contend that the Soviets had agreed to comply with their obligations.

Finally, after a visit to Washington by the chief of the Soviet general staff and leader of the "hard-line" faction, General Mikhail Moiseyev, the deal was apparently done. U.S. officials bravely maintain that the Soviets—strapped for cash and in need of American help with the G-7—essentially accepted our terms. In fact, on at least two points, the United States appears to have yielded to the Soviet terms. Moscow's preposterous reassignment of tanks, personnel carriers, and other armored equipment to the non-treaty-limited strategic-rocket forces will apparently be allowed to stand on the grounds that these can be described as exempted "security forces." Similarly, a large number of other armored personnel carriers will be exempted by dint of being "converted" into troop transports.

In short, on these and perhaps other points, the USSR will have succeeded in obtaining additional concessions by simply demanding more after the bargaining was supposed to be over and everything agreed upon. Unfortunately, this behavior is not unique to the Conventional Forces Treaty. Last year a U.S.–Soviet agreement was reached to cap and destroy much of the two nations' chemical-weapons stockpiles. Now the Soviets have indicated that they wish to reopen its provisions so as to permit them to use manufacturing facilities and perhaps even lethal agents for civilian purposes.

Considerations of substance as well as precedent have caused the United States to balk at the Soviet request on chemical arms. Among other reasons, accepting such an arrangement with Moscow would make the already unrealistic, unverifiable, and unenforceable global ban on chemical weapons the Bush Administration is seeking still more problematic. Yet, if the CFE is any guide, Washington's willingness to maintain cordial relations with Moscow and to continue to make "progress" on arms control at almost any price may produce U.S. concessions on this score as well.

Still more worrisome is the fate of a far more significant treaty—the START treaty, which will sharply reduce U.S. strategic forces. In this case Moscow has systematically reopened provisions while the negotiations are still in progress. Moscow's idea is that the closer the signing ceremony, the more the U.S. can be euchred into making unreciprocated concessions lest the agreement, and U.S.–Soviet relations more generally, be jeopardized.

Still, that is fair in an active negotiation. Indeed, the U.S. would be well advised to take a leaf from the Soviet playbook and reopen elements of the START treaty that are not in our interest. Examples of such provisions include the draft treaty's failure to ban unmonitorable mobile ballistic missiles (remember the Iraqi Scuds?); its granting Moscow the *de facto* exclusive right to field 154 extremely powerful SS-18 missiles; and its flawed verification scheme that will not permit on-site monitoring of missile final-assembly plants.

Mr. Gaffney formerly served as the senior Defense Department official responsible for arms-control matters in the Reagan Administration. He is currently the director of the Center for Security Policy in Washington.

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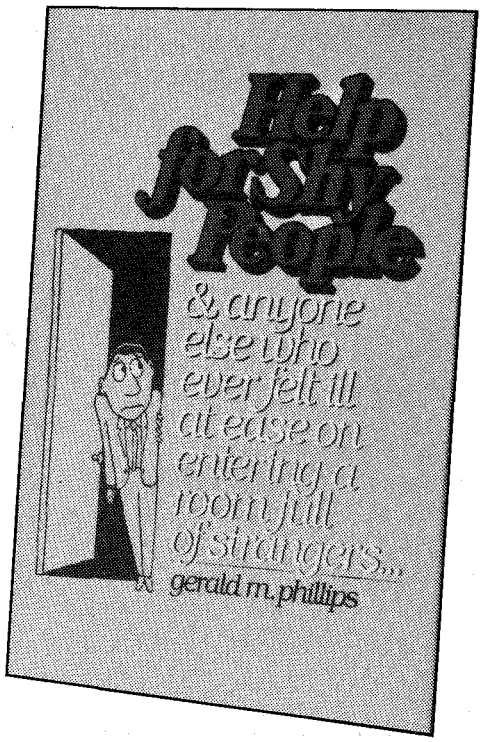
Even the painfully shy can learn to get "...fame, fortune and beautiful lovers..."



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Freud stated that "...fame, fortune and beautiful lovers..." are the aspirations of artists. If you're shy, such aspirations are painful fantasies. The shy person is usually convinced that their shyness is an insurmountable obstacle. And as a result, they're condemned to 'lives of quiet desperation'.

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Whether or not these sorts of improvements—which would enhance the prospects that the START treaty would actually reduce the power of Soviet strategic forces approximately as severely as it would those of the United States—are made before the accord is signed, it must be determined now that Soviet play beyond the end-game will not be tolerated. Once agreement is reached and the documents are signed, the U.S. position must be, Take it or leave it. Doing otherwise can only further reduce the utility of a process already too much marked by sloppy U.S. negotiating of and unilateral adherence to dubious arms-control agreements. □

LAW WARS

CAN THE A.B.A. DECLARE INDEPENDENCE?

ROBERT STOWE ENGLAND

DURING a heated debate at the American Bar Association's annual meeting in Chicago last August, a pro-choice attorney said something quite remarkable in her plea for a neutral stand on abortion. "The ABA should not become just another political lobby—God knows the American public has enough of them already," Nancy Iredale told the House of Delegates, the body that dictates official policy for the ABA's 360,000 members.

Over the past 25 years the ABA has taken liberal and left-wing stands on a host of issues, especially privacy rights, civil rights, and criminal procedures—all issues that have been the focus of Supreme Court deliberations. In addition, through its large Washington staff, the ABA has lobbied Congress and the Executive Branch on behalf of these positions. In short, the ABA has for quite some time been precisely "just another political lobby." The real news is that the association's members are beginning to wake up to that reality and its consequences.

The last (for now, anyway) hurrah of the hard-line politicizers was at the ABA convention in Los Angeles in February 1990, where delegates voted overwhelmingly in favor of a pro-abortion resolution. However, following that vote, more than 1,500 members resigned from the ABA for religious reasons, prompting others to reconsider. The first tangible sign of their second thoughts was the outcome of the abortion vote at the Chicago meeting last August. After a lengthy debate, the neutrality forces won a surprise victory by a 200 to 188 margin from a House of Delegates whose personal views were overwhelmingly pro choice. Soon afterward, the ABA issued a rating of Well Qualified for Supreme Court nominee David Souter, presumed by many to be anti-abortion.

Some members seem determined to carry the neutrality campaign beyond the abortion issue: to re-establish the political independence of the ABA in general, and to reorient it toward its traditional trade-organization mission. Miss Iredale spelled that position out clearly last summer, declaring the ABA to be "an organization dedicated to the administration of justice, to providing legal services, to increasing public awareness about law, and most of all, to supporting us, the individual lawyers, as we carry out our daily practice."

The Left is furious that its control is slipping. Last summer Alexander Forger called the neutrality resolution "an evisceration of the association, which will no longer be able to pursue the purpose of its being." Forger accused the neutrality forces of representing an outside force that was trying to take over the ABA. No doubt he was referring to the warning issued by Attorney General Richard Thornburgh that if the ABA did not abandon its pro-abortion stand, then the Justice Department would cease having the ABA review candidates for judicial appointments. Anthony Palermo, who headed up the Pro-Bar Committee for Abortion Neutrality, was outraged at Forger's charge of outside interference. "This is a grass-roots movement deeply offended by the process and outcome in Los Angeles," he said.

Events at the meeting in Seattle this February show the progress of this undeclared and unheralded war for political independence. The pro-abortion forces were counting on an easy victory for a proposal from the Vermont Bar that would have had the ABA oppose criminal penalties for women who have illegal abortions and for doctors who perform them. Before last year the ABA had passed dozens of boilerplate proposals which fell just short of declaring a constitutional right to abortion. This time, however, the House of Delegates voted to defer consideration until this summer at the annual convention in Atlanta—a setback for the pro-abortion forces, who wanted a minor victory to build on in Atlanta.

Playing for the Future

FOR BOTH SIDES, the stakes are high. If the neutrality forces win a second major vote on abortion, it could begin a depoliticization process that will increasingly put left-wing advocacy groups on the defensive. On the other hand, if the neutrality forces lose, then the ABA will be doomed for years to remain tied to the yo-yo strings of the ACLU, the NAACP, and other such groups.

How did liberal advocacy groups gain such a stranglehold on the ABA? They built a power base from within, beginning with the creation of the Individual Rights and Responsibilities Section in 1966. Today the IR&R has only 2,700 members, or 1 per cent of the ABA membership, but it was, until last year, able to set virtually the entire political agenda for the ABA.

How does the IR&R get its way inside the ABA? One veteran observer describes the group's role as that of a "Trotskyite cell" infiltrating the ABA's committees and power structure. A close look at the top IR&R members will find the names of people who are indeed far to the left on the political

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spectrum: Father Robert F. Drinan, former president of the radical Americans for Democratic Action, who was a pacifist congressman from Massachusetts during the Vietnam War and a Sandinista sympathizer during the 1980s; D.C. Judge Abner J. Mikva, a very liberal former congressman from Illinois; and Jerome Shestack of Philadelphia, a lieutenant in Senator Joseph Biden's ill-fated 1988 presidential campaign. The names of IR&R leaders also show up in other powerful committee and section positions.

The permanent ABA staff in Chicago, which is decidedly liberal, wittingly and unwittingly plays into the hands of the liberal-left puppeteers. For example, when an analysis report is issued on a resolution, the staff calls on the activist groups to do the report. There is no independent ABA analysis. The report supporting the pro-abortion resolution in February 1990 was written in part by Estelle Rogers, a consultant to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. A 1990 resolution endorsing the Kennedy–Hawkins civil-rights bill was backed by an ABA report written by Kerry Scanlon, an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Fifth Estate

THE political causes adopted by the ABA would not automatically be a public concern, were the ABA strictly a trade organization. But the ABA is a powerful player in the American political system. For nearly forty years it has played a quasi-official role in screening federal judicial nominees for their professional competence on behalf of the U.S. Attorney General. In 1987 the ABA found itself at the center of a public storm when a dissident minority of four on its Federal Judiciary Committee played a starring role in the dramatic defeat of Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork.

The ABA's role in the judiciary selection process also partially explains why a lawyerly version of the neoconservative movement has not dared unveil itself within the ABA. Dan Popeo, of the Washington Legal Foundation, says some conservative and moderate lawyers bite their tongues in ABA debates because speaking out might harm the possibility of their becoming judges. They are afraid of the liberal-left veto power within the Federal Judiciary Committee, he says. If the ABA were removed from the judicial screening process, Popeo believes, the curtain would fall on the Left's orchestration of the ABA.

Marching through Georgia

WITH ITS enemies in retreat, the forces of depoliticization within the ABA have been gathering steam and will soon go public. A new ad hoc depoliticization committee is already being formed, according to James Wootton, a Washington, D.C., attorney who is helping to organize it. It is dubbed for now the "Keller Committee," after the *Keller* v. *State Bar of California* ruling by the Supreme Court last year. Since, in California, an attorney must belong to the bar to practice law, the Court ruled that compulsory dues to finance political and ideological activities violates the First Amendment rights of those who oppose such activities.

If the Keller Committee gets its way, the ABA will be able to support political activities only through voluntary donations, and ABA political statements will have disclaimers making it clear that only a limited number of members support them.

The Keller Committee will also seek to end ABA support for what Wootton calls a "politicized" Legal Services Corporation. For several years the ABA has been a staunch ally of those in the LSC who want to pursue law reform, lobbying, and class-action suits instead of providing legal services to individuals who are poor, the original mandate for the LSC.

Pro-choice forces have apparently decided to stage a tactical retreat at the Atlanta convention this August. According to the ABA, there are no abortion resolutions on the agenda, and there are no rumors of any surprise resolutions to be introduced from the floor. However, one insider confided that the pro-choice forces are planning to stage the mother of all resolution battles at the 1992 convention in San Francisco, where they will be able to pack the convention with sympathetic liberal and leftist attorneys from the Bay Area. The ABA's new president, Talbot (Sandy) D'Alemberte, who will chair that convention, has promised an epic struggle to pass a sweeping pro-abortion resolution. The battle is far from over. □

RIGHT TO LIFE

ABORTION, JUDAISM, AND JEWS

DON FEDER

AN ARTICLE in the *New York Times* a while back described what was billed as a Catholic–Jewish forum on abortion. The participants in this interfaith dialogue were Bishop Thomas V. Daily of Brooklyn, a champion of the unborn, and Rabbi Shira Stern of the Monroe Township Jewish Center, who provided the standard distortions of *halakah* (Jewish law).

As a religious Jew, I have become reconciled to modernists of my faith shamelessly misrepresenting Jewish teaching in this crucial area. What's puzzling here is Bishop Daily's acquiescence in the travesty. By his participation, he seems implicitly to recognize Rabbi Stern's views as the position of Judaism.

Not only is this a disservice to my faith, but it undercuts his own. Jesus said nothing about abortion, and Paul very little. Judaism is the foundation for Christian opposition to feticide. If Rabbi Stern's views are halakahically valid, where does that leave right-to-life Catholics?

(Continues on page 50)

Mr. Feder is a Boston Herald *writer and syndicated columnist.*

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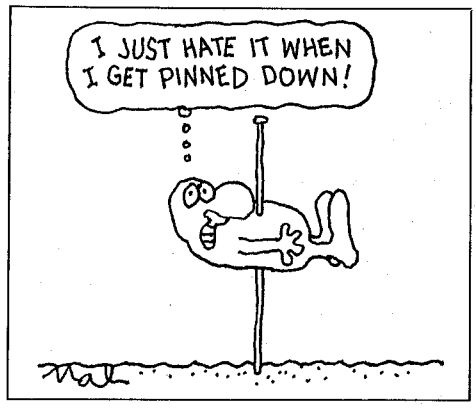
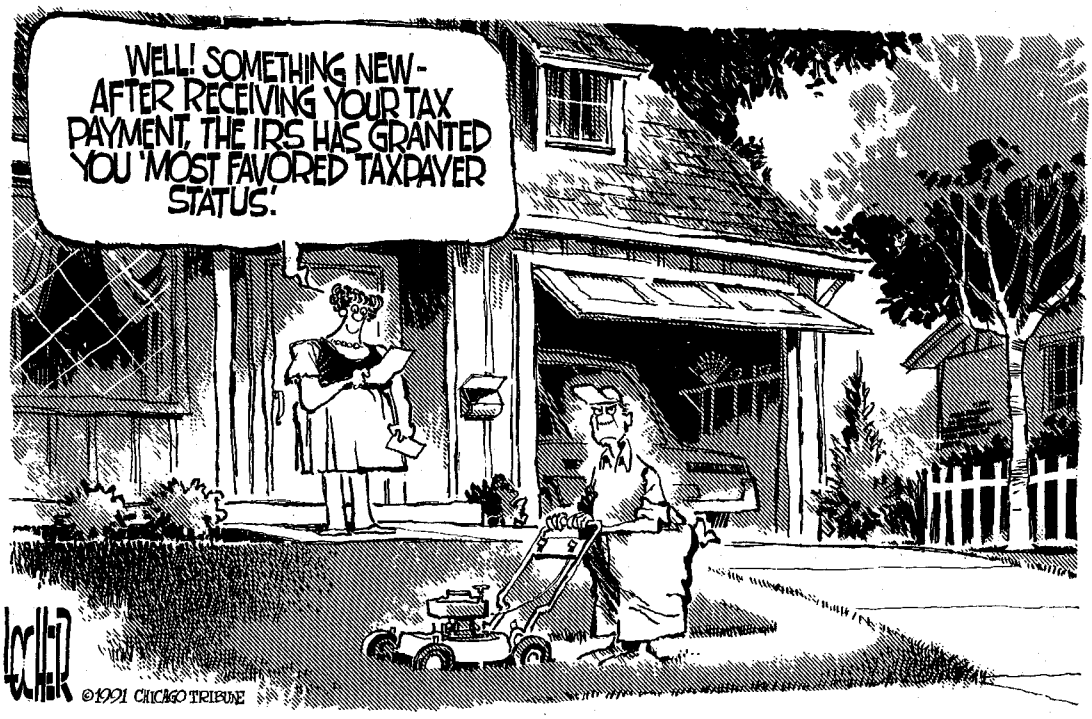
help

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The West Bank Thing

Secretary Baker, who's
Never known to blow a fuse,
Bust a gasket, or explode
On the diplomatic road,
Said things shockingly outré,
Turning Miss Tutwiler grey.

W. H. VON DREELE

"Mine is 'Summer Strawberry.' Yours is 'Nuclear Winter.'"

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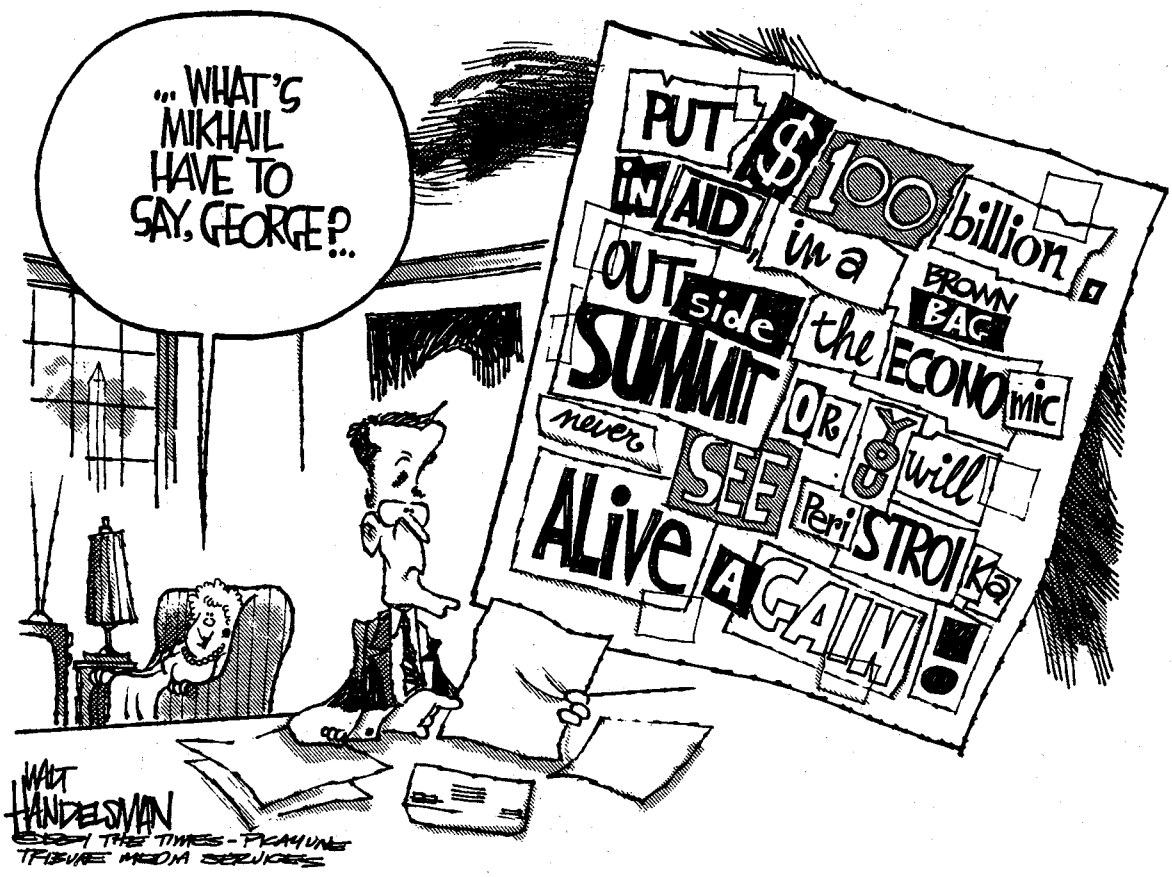
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The Last Angry Man

MATTHEW SCULLY

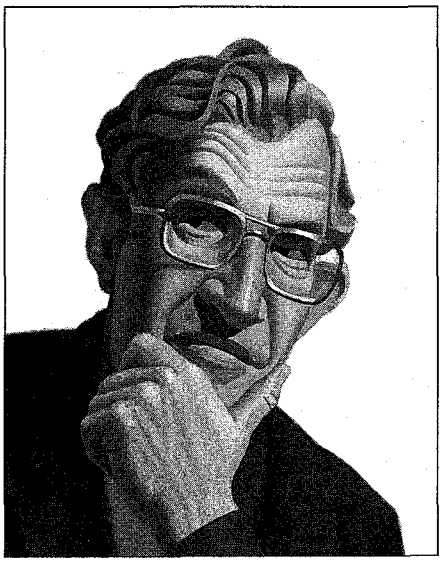
LISTENING to Noam Chomsky in his occasional television interviews, one gets the impression of an intense but modest, sincere, and personable fellow. And indeed a conservative columnist wrote recently of Chomsky that he is a thinker with "a deeply original view of the way the world works," a man whose "austere integrity" commands respect. Whatever one might make of Chomsky's radical ideas, we can at least admire his "deep sense of intellectual honor" and answer him with the good will due an honest dissenter.

Reading *Deterring Democracy*, you have to try very hard to keep this in mind. It would be easier if Chomsky would extend some of that same good will to others. On paper his courtesy and amiability vanish, leaving only the intensity and the impression of a thoroughly unpleasant, embittered ideologue. Perhaps he is a man of great integrity and intellectual honor, but he seems to think he is the last such man in America.

Deterring Democracy, by Noam Chomsky (Verso, 402 pp., $29.95)

One might have thought his past political ventures would have humbled him. Here, after all, is a man whose quest for social justice, sanity, and compassion once led him to embrace the North Vietnamese "peasant liberators," who, when their cause finally prevailed, exterminated a few million of their people. But somehow that "deeply original view of the way the world works" always leaves him an out; always America's malevolent capitalist "elites," not Chomsky, are shown to be culpable.

"The official story," we learn in *Deterring Democracy*, "has always been that we contain the Russians, deterring them and thwarting their malicious designs. But the reality, as has long been evident, is that the fear of potential superpower conflict has served to contain and deter the U.S. and its far more ambitious global designs." Just as during Vietnam, America is controlled by a capitalist "oligopoly" whose corporate-run "terrorist apparatus" aims to dominate the world's raw materials. Especially, of course, those of underdeveloped countries—hence the "U.S. terror and subversion throughout the Third World." And now, absent that Soviet "deterrent," these corporate elites will be even more rapacious.



Chris Miles

Throughout this discursive book, Chomsky gives us first the "official story" and then the truth, the grim realities from which "we prefer to avert our eyes." A chapter will begin typically with extensive quotes from one or another obscure, long-neglected government document disclosing America's "real intentions," and from there wind through any number of topics, from postwar Greece ("the real threat was indigenous nationalism"), to Panama and George Bush ("an effete New England aristocrat" whose very name brings to mind "images of tortured and mutilated bodies by the tens of thousands" in Central America), to the Medellín Cartel (an obvious CIA effort to divert public attention), to Woodrow Wilson's intervention in the Bolshevik Revolution, to our horrible mistreatment of the Indians. But all rhetorical roads lead back to Chomsky's current preoccupation, Central America and the untold crimes from which we prefer to avert our eyes.

We turn away, Chomsky writes, so as not to see the "piles of bones and rivers of blood" for which our government, acting through its appointed despots and death squads, is responsible. It is "not surprising that hostility to the Sandinistas was virtually uniform in media commentary and other inner circles. The official reasons (human rights, democracy, the Soviet Union, and so on) are too farfetched to be taken seriously." Under the Sandinistas there once seemed the promise of a better day. Alas, Reagan and his "liberal Democrat and media accomplices can take credit for having reduced those hopes to ashes." That we hear little about these atrocities only attests to corporate America's efficient "modalities for controlling the domestic population," especially "the White House–Congress–media" connection, which filters news before we ever get it. Still, the evidence is there, and only "moral cowardice" prevents us from acknowledging it.

The obvious reply is to ask Chomsky if the hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguan people who voted down the Sandinistas were also moral cowards. But he has a ready answer. They were "coerced" into it by our economic boycott—only the most apparent of America's "extraordinary efforts to devastate Nicaragua by terror and economic warfare." Coerced and bullied into submission, they made their way through all those "piles of bones and rivers of blood" to vote against their Sandinista deliverers.

What makes all this particularly absurd is that in between Chomsky's own grisly exaggerations, he assumes the haughty tone of a logician warning his readers not to succumb to "fallacies," "hyperbole," or "hysterical flights of rhetoric." We must avoid appeals to emotion and settle for nothing

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Ramsey Clark. But of course, that's exactly how accomplices fearing detection *would* behave. To dismiss his hard empirical "evidence" as nonsense is thus to implicate oneself in the subtle media conspiracy to silence those few who dare to speak the truth, Chomsky, Cockburn, and Clark, and at all costs to suppress David MacMichael's damning World Court testimony.

That's the sad thing about being America's lone, persecuted voice for social justice, sanity, and compassion. You enjoy every intellectual freedom but the greatest one of all—the freedom to admit a mistake. □

The Abyss

CHILTON WILLIAMSON JR.

ONE millennium ago, Christendom was rife with speculation that the Parousia was finally at hand, and with it the end of history. Today, with the year 2000 less than nine years away, Christendom has been replaced by that much more vague abstraction known as "the West," and public speculation regarding the events and conditions accompanying the Second Millennium is limited to such matters as the probable status of women at the dawn of the third one, how large the world population is likely to be, and how small the trade deficit. Nevertheless, at private levels of society, there is subversive talk. A Catholic priest of my acquaintance confided to me at supper two weeks ago that the idea that the Second Coming may indeed be imminent *had* occurred to him. Likewise, David Walsh, who teaches political thought at Catholic University of America, writes: "Now the sense of living in a transitional phase has become pervasive . . . Modernity has been overcome . . . All that has been present from the inception of modernity has now been unfolded."

After Ideology: Recovering the Spiritual Foundations of Freedom, by David Walsh (HarperCollins, 296 pp., $29.95)

Professor Walsh's understanding of Our Lord's schedule, however, may be inferred from the fact that, rather than don a sandwich board bearing this message, he has written *After Ideology*. Walsh does not predict the end of history; instead he suggests, as others have done, that history may in a sense be starting over again as humanity, recovering its soul, recovers at the same time its head, and with these its true sense of direction. He agrees with Eric Voegelin that the age of the great ideological thinkers is finished; ideology can be taken no further, and hence has no future.

The atrocities of the twentieth century are now recognized as the inevitable result of Western man's quest for absolute power and total control, over nature and himself, that has been going on since the Renaissance. "Is there a necessary link between the promise of universal human progress and the reality of persistent human failure, between the vision of a brave new world and the recognition of its staggering spiritual costs, between the vast expansion of human power and the equally vast abuse of power in our time?" Walsh believes that there is such a link, and that some of the most exceptional thinkers of the past hundred years (he calls them "post-modernists" in recognition of their prophetic powers, not necessarily in point of chronological time) have not only recognized it as an intellectual reality, but have confronted it upon the level of existential truth.

Walsh argues that modernity, having arrived at a dead end plain to all those with eyes to see and ears to hear, has revealed to us the truth concerning our nature as human beings, our place within the created world, and our destiny in the transcendent one. Post-modern man, living after the horrors of the Gulag, of Auschwitz, of Hiroshima, and of Pol Pot's Cambodia, is open to this truth, but remains incapable of being brought to it by the traditional avenues of dogma and authority. Instead, he must *experience* truth by being led to consider, not the Answer, but the Question upon which the Answer follows.

In Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Camus, Voegelin, and Solzhenitsyn, Walsh identifies five writers who, by pursu-

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ing their modernist impulses into the depths of the abyss, discovered that these same impulses, when rigorously and honestly obeyed, lead not toward the rationalism of modernity but toward the Truth that is Christ Himself. (Voegelin isn't really closely described by this formula, Nietzsche seems to have recognized God only to reject Him, and Camus did not live to confess explicitly the Christian implications of his thought; but that's how it goes when you're writing a book.)

The heart of *After Ideology* consists of Walsh's explication of the work of these five authors, from which one derives two salient impressions: one, how absolutely atrociously Eric Voegelin wrote; and two, how thoroughly, and with how much human sympathy, Walsh has read the greatest prophet of the modern age. I have quite simply never read a better gloss, nor it seems to me half so good a one, as Walsh's on the work of Friedrich Nietzsche.

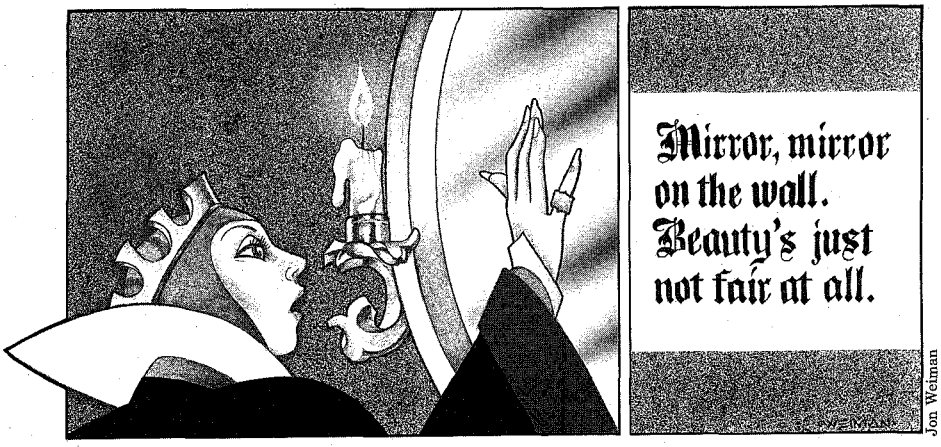
Walsh is excellent also in demonstrating how the secular millennialism of the past six centuries has been directly inspired by the Christian eschaton; how, in fact, the doctrines of Christianity, when activated by the freedom God offers to human beings, almost guarantee their own misinterpretation at the hands of misguided and impatient people. (This susceptibility to error is, of course, consonant with the whole of Christ's Truth, which, in addition to being a promise, has always functioned as a test as well.) Since Christ, the West—incapable of returning to the "compact" cosmos of the ancient world—has been compelled to face, honestly or dishonestly, the existence of the transcendent one; from the beginning of the modern age until the present, honesty has been the exception rather than the rule in this confrontation.

But Christianity, Walsh says, provides only one part of the truth by which men are meant to live; it is in "philosophical Christianity" that postmodern humanity must discover the remedy for its condition. In a long piece of sustained argument that recalls Chesterton's wonderful discussion (in *The Everlasting Man*) of how Christianity came into the world at precisely that moment in history when man, needing it most, had been prepared at last to receive it, Walsh explains that the philosophy of the classical world provides the vision of order and of natural virtue that supplements, necessarily and perfectly, the truth of divine order and supernatural virtue that Christ revealed. Voegelin's exaggerated statement of the otherworldliness of St. Paul, Walsh believes, accounts for much of the coolness toward Christianity that is so apparent in his work. On the other hand, Voegelin, writing that "History is Christ writ large," did understand how, in Walsh's words, "The opening toward being requires the inclusion of the full range of experiences and symbolizations that have created order in human history."

Since Walsh states, correctly and explicitly, that change is effected in human affairs only by individual repentance and by the personal and singular conversion of the human heart, the final chapters of his book, in which he speculates upon the possibility of the spiritual rebirth of contemporary nations and societies, seem to me to be little more than the usual struggles writers are obligated to undertake in concluding a book of this sort. And *After Ideology* might have concluded at least ten pages sooner were it not for the author's insistence upon the politically correct "he or she, his or her" usage, which is an unconscionable waste of printer's ink and of the reader's patience. Perhaps in the postideological age that Professor Walsh is predicting, men of his intellectual stature will no longer feel a need to stroke and mollify the infantile ideological passions of the present one. □

Poisoned Apple

MARY G. GOTSCHALL



Jon Weiman

IN *The Beauty Myth*, a provocative new feminist tract which should take its place alongside such polemics as Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, Naomi Wolf argues that American women are enslaved by the cultural edict to be beautiful. They are victims of an impossible standard.

The Beauty Myth, by Naomi Wolf (Morrow, 348 pp., $21.95)

The pressure, according to Miss Wolf, has become relentless during the past decade, as women have begun competing head-on with men in the professional sphere.

For Naomi Wolf, the beauty business isn't just a ploy by Madison Avenue to make a buck. What truly powers the $33-billion-a-year diet industry, the $20-billion cosmetics industry, the $300-million cosmetic-surgery industry, and the $7-billion pornography industry, she argues, is a far more insidious and destructive agenda. It is a political tool to keep women down: "The beauty myth is not about women at all. It is about men's institutions and institutional power."

According to Miss Wolf, the myth has a number of uses. It pits women against one another, thereby diluting their political influence; as she puts it, "What women look like is considered important because what we say is not." It stokes the consumerist engine of our economy, where women shoppers play a pivotal role; and it enables

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employers to get away with paying women less than men. Indeed, Miss Wolf charges that the success of Western economies is linked to the chronic underpayment of women.

The author notes the historical roots of this problem. The modern beauty myth can be traced to the social upheaval following industrialization, around 1830, when a new class of literate, idle women was suddenly in a position to challenge male dominance. The upshot, she concludes, is that "Women are mere 'beauties' in men's culture so that culture can be kept male."

The beauty myth—in Miss Wolf's view—transforms women into self-destructive, fearful, even paranoid creatures who have a love-hate addiction to food, a negative body image, poor self-esteem, and tenuous relationships with the men in their lives. They frequently become anorexic or undergo dangerous cosmetic surgery to achieve the perfect body. They pursue this fruitless quest with the zealotry of religious fanatics, and yet they are doomed to fail because they are pursuing a chimera.

The author cites a raft of data to prove her point. She notes that cosmetic surgery is the fastest-growing medical specialty in America, and she claims 10 per cent of women are afflicted by eating disorders—a marked rise during the last decade. And many of these women are among the best educated in American society. Miss Wolf rails against the frauds perpetrated by the cosmetics industry, and roundly criticizes women's magazines for their docile collusion in this fraud.

Ultimately, Miss Wolf ascribes all of modern women's social ills to the beauty myth, including the rise in rape, mental illness, and sexual abuse of children during the last decade. In

RANDOM NOTES

■ *"I Went to ABA, but All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt,"* or *Convention Report, Part I.* I'm wandering through New York's colossal Javits Center—there are 1,700 exhibitors and 35,000 people at the 1991 American Booksellers Association convention—hoping to discover the Latest Truth about publishing, but that golden Truth has to be assayed from the iron of promotional discourse, and by the convention's third day, even the most levelheaded publishers speak like trade-show holograms; they are lifelike, but the spiel is looped, the electronic smiles too taut.

Which reminds me of a certain CEO's explanation of his management philosophy: "Everybody who works here should wonder if he'll be fired tomorrow." Esprit de corps is *très abattu*. One of the consequences of mergermania is "down-sizing." At Simon & Schuster, Viking–Penguin, Bantam–Doubleday–Dell, Random House, and HarperCollins, mergers create redundancies and a cataract of pink slips. New accounting practices demand lower investment but higher and faster projected return. Industry-wide figures may show decreased title output (they ought to: the number of books vying for review attention and retail space had grown unmanageably), but at the Big Five the number of new books continues to increase. Overhead has been reduced. Self-indulgence is out; accountability is in. Fine, except for the lost distinction between the *maximum* and the *optimum*.

Most of the convention's Big Displays are neatly linear; various divisions are clearly delimited. But the large Random House booth is maximally incoherent, a Caribbean-island bazaar so crowded with so many stalls (Random House, Knopf, Vintage, Crown, Harmony, Clarkson Potter, Pantheon, Shocken, Shambala, Times Books, Villard, Reader's Digest, Fodor, Orion, Outlet, Happy House) and so many mongers (rights reps, editors, salesmen, publicists, assorted executives—some from every division) that the tourists seem reluctant to come ashore.

The Bantam booth, a McDonald's on Monte Cassino, is only marginally more approachable (up steps, of course), and seems a happy gathering place for the publisher's employees: past, present, and future.

Book retailers return home from this Love Boat cruise toting shopping bags filled with trinkets (catalogues, T-shirts, book bags, posters), but few books. And few big publishers actually take orders; most would be stunned—not to mention annoyed—to be asked to take one.

Certainly the booksellers, known for their, ahem, *liberality*, swear with a certainty that bigger isn't better, and blame top managers like Alberto Vitale and Dick Snyder, and rich owners like Rupert Murdoch and socialist billionaire (God, I love that phrase) Robert Maxwell. It's the hated Edifice Complex—the empire-building mentality that streamlines operations and then propagates junk. This is the first post–Kitty Kelley convention, and folks are feeling downright smirched, although I met no one who had refused to retail *Nancy Reagan* or even *American Psycho*.

So there may be something to this Decade of Greed business after all, although, with the possible exception of Mr. Murdoch, none of the accused (propagator or purveyor) is exactly a Reaganite. Peter Drucker or Tom Peters I am not, but surely the short-term obsession with maximum profit is undermining the long-term prospect of optimum success. You don't have to be the Pope to know greed's not good.

Some Big Publishers and their Big Editors have indeed become little more than the literary equivalent of department-store fashion buyers—watching trends, favoring the colorful and provocative *product*; preferring celebrities to writers, fads to philosophies. Some object to this; I do not. For all the whining about the Death of Literature, the fact remains that more good writing is available today than ever before, although not much of it is contemporary (but, then, not much ever is). Let Ivana Trump "author" a novel—her readers will not be reading her *instead of* Jane Austen. And Miss Austen's readers may take heart from the fact that two dozen editions of *Pride and Prejudice* are currently in print.

But down-sizing has meant that even these glitzy "acquiring editors," let alone the more homely, blue-pencil-neck "line editors," are no longer as ably assisted as once they were: they now share an editorial assistant with one or more colleagues, guaranteeing accelerated burnout and turnover of the underpaid boys and girls who staff the entry-level jobs, and inviting the kind of textual errors and overwritten work too often bound between covers these days.

Last year's whispers inquired about the color of grass on the other side of book publishing's own fences. This year people asked openly about life beyond the industry's borders. —BRAD MINER

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so doing, she falls into the trap of oversimplification.

Women's stature in modern society is the product of a confluence of factors, and the "beauty myth" is merely one of them. One must also weigh such factors as the force of tradition, our evolution from a "hunter-gatherer" society, the legal and political system, institutional pressures, religion, portrayals of beautiful women in Western art, biological and physiological functions, and innate sex differences. The list goes on and on.

Beyond that, I would argue that much of what Miss Wolf criticizes in our culture springs from basic animal drives. Among many species, one sex uses decoration to entice the other to mate. Male birds, for example, sport colorful plumage to attract females. There is a competition to attract the strongest, most desirable mates with the best genes. Women's pursuit of beauty serves a similar reproductive agenda. On the most fundamental level, it is a behavior that has evolved as part of a competitive courtship ritual to attract a powerful male and mate with him. Until recent times, this mating ritual was all-important to women, who relied upon it for their economic survival as well as that of their children. Thus, women beautify themselves to ensnare men. The beauty industry has correspondingly sprung up as a response to the way women conduct their half of the mating dance.

There is also scientific evidence indicating that there are cognitive differences between men and women, which in turn manifest themselves in different styles of communication and behavior. Deborah Tannen chronicles some of these communication differences in her current book, *You Just Don't Understand*. From an early age, boys are object-oriented and girls are person-oriented; from these different orientations flow correspondingly different behavior. And ornamentation may be one such difference. Women take pleasure in adornment.

Women have free will, contrary to Miss Wolf's assertion, and they are not forced to buy beauty products. They choose to do so. If this were not so, fashion and the beauty industry would not thrive. The capitalist system is driven by the bottom line and not by politics. If women stopped buying beauty products and services, the industry would die, as other industries have died in the past.

The central flaw of *The Beauty Myth* is its extremism. It lacks moderation, balance, judiciousness. Miss Wolf goes overboard, hammering away at her central theme with the same fanaticism that she ascribes to women hooked on diet fads. *The Beauty Myth* shades into caricature—even paranoia—when she writes that, because of the pursuit of pulchritude, "life-fearing neuroses are everywhere."

Indeed, the book projects many of Miss Wolf's own psychological hangups onto all of womankind. In the section on eating disorders, for example, she admits that she was an anorexic when she was 13 years old, and one of her best friends died of anorexia. Presumably, her views on women's eating disorders have been shaped by these personal experiences.

Further, her solutions to the beauty myth seem less than compelling. They include making age discrimination, "beauty" harassment, and the double standard for appearance issues in labor negotiations; creating female rituals and rites of passage; encouraging all-female communal nakedness to overcome fears about body image; and encouraging inter-generational contact among women. Much of this already takes place in various settings without achieving the effect Miss Wolf desires.

Despite excellent writing and wonderful breadth of scholarship, *The Beauty Myth* suffers from a flawed central premise. It is suffused with pessimism and refuses to acknowledge the real gains that women have made professionally and politically in the last two decades—and no doubt will continue to make. □

Dr. Johnson Revisited

RALPH DE TOLEDANO

THE conventional wisdom has it that language evolves progressively, that vocabularies hone themselves with the passage of time. But language is a lusty wench who bestows her favors and then withdraws them. Some words last for centuries; others disappear and then return with the same spelling but a different meaning. Reading Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*, or that part of it which E. L. McAdam Jr. and George Milne culled for Pantheon Books in 1963, I am struck by the number of words which we consider a part of our time's slang or colloquial usage but which caught Dr. Johnson's attention—as well as others which passed into what the eighteenth century would have called the *dormitory* (what today we would call a *mortuary*). As sport for the philologist there are also those words whose meaning is at as far a remove from our own day as the *Dictionary* itself is. And then there are the products of Dr. Johnson's whimsy of *prejudication*, as when he defines *oats* as "a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people."

Like ourselves, Dr. Johnson's contemporaries were at ease with such verbs as *to blab*, *to roast* (a person, as at a Friar's Club *roast* of a famous guest), *to palm*, *to swap*, and *to grease* (bribe). *Flush* (affluent), *bamboozle*, *horse laugh*, *new-fangled*, *hush money*, *chitchat*, *rotgut*, *sleezy*, *bubby* (breast), *fib*, *pat* (fit or convenient), *lick* (a blow), *huckster*, and *mizmaze* (which we now spell *mishmash* and consider of Yiddish derivation) are all in the Johnson compendium—along with many words of Latin derivation which are still with us.

But what yanked so many words from the *Dictionary*'s meaning to ours? Why should a *commoner*, great or otherwise, have signified a prostitute? The *castrati* were well known to Dr. Johnson, yet one of his definitions for *to castrate* was "to take away the obscene parts of a writing." *Conservative* was "having the power of opposing diminution or injury." (Could the liberals have been at it even then?) A *flasher* in 1755 was not an exhibitionist but "a man of more appearance of wit than reality," and an *exhibition* a salary or a pension. For *proletarian* read "mean, wretched, vile" and for

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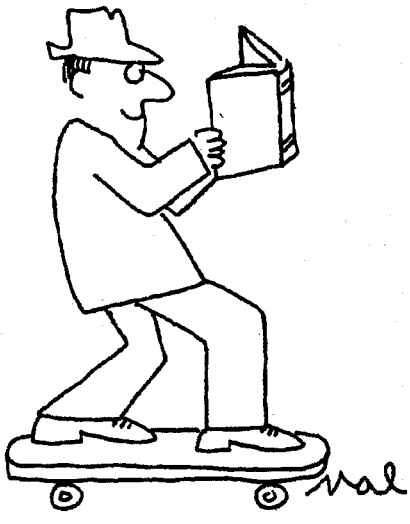
promiscuous, "mingled, confused, undistinguished." *Essay* translated to "an irregular, undigested piece, not a regular and ordered composition." A *husband* was an "oeconomist," *indolence* freedom from pain, which hugs the Latin, as does *impeccable*, "exempt from possibility of sin." *Luggage* meant "anything of more weight than value," and *lunch* or *luncheon*, "as much food as a hand can hold." As for



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modern, it translated to vulgar or common. And *tollbooth*? A prison, of course. *Schrewd*: having the qualities of a shrew. *Smug*: "spruce, but without elegance." *Terse*: smooth. *Sophistication*: adulteration, with no apology to the sophists. And *teen*, with much prescience: sorrow, grief.

Of the words which have not survived, *to sowl* ("to pull up by the ears") would have been of value to Lyndon Johnson and his beagles. *Obstupefaction*—"the act of inducing stupidity"—should be in every TV critic's glossary. To *oppilate*—to heap up obstructions—is one for the Senate. So too is *slubbergullion*, "a paltry, sorry wretch." *Over-cloy* explains itself, and so does *over-office*, "to lord by virtue of an office." How descriptive for a certain senator from New England is *bedswerver*—"one that swerves from one bed to another." Or *to inquinate*, to pollute or corrupt. In the political field as well are a number of words to point and clarify debate: *politicaster*, a petty or ignorant politician; *sinistrous*, perverse, wrong-headed, leftist; *sermocinator*, a preachifying speechmaker; *tonguepad*, a great talker; *opiniatry*, inflexibility of thought; and *to threap*, to argue too much.

As writers and literary critics, we could make use of such words as *altiloquence*, for pompous language, and *ambages*, a multiplicity of words or circular speech. And there is, of course, *grammaticaster*, a mean verbal pedant. And *longanimity*, "patience of offense, forbearance." For less specialized use, there is *eyeservice*, work "performed only under inspection"; *genial*, "that which contributes to procreation," which could be modernized to include medical research into the weaknesses of the genes. With no knowledge of Brooklyn, Dr. Johnson gave room to *moidered*—nothing to do with gang killings, but a word meaning crazed.

All this *obsimathy*, or late erudition, lurks in Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary*. To restore it to the language would make us but *nocent*, or guilty, of enriching a contemporary expression which limitedly accepts its handful of obscene ripostes. It would be an act of *refocillation*, the restoration of strength by refreshment. □

THEATER

Lost on Broadway

EVA RESNIKOVA

IT'S difficult to discuss the 1990–91 Broadway season, and the Tony Awards that marked its official end on June 2, without sounding cynical. For one thing, the number of Tony-eligible shows dropped to an embarrassing 25, with the result that 80 per cent of the season's offerings received nominations. You had to be either unspeakably bad (the high-school rap musical *Standup Tragedy*) or very naughty (Nicol Williamson publicly pronouncing *I Hate Hamlet* flawed and then taking it upon himself to inject a note of danger into the proceedings by improvising during the fencing scenes) to avoid being nominated for *something*.

Miss Resnikova reviews theater for NR *and dance for the* New York Observer *and* The New Criterion.

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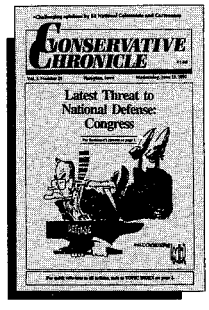

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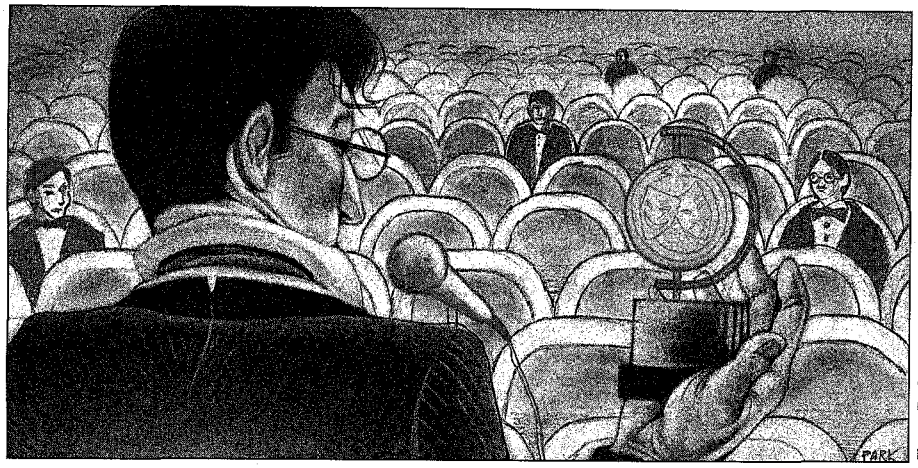

Chang Park

The winner's circle is, of course, a more exclusive club. But there are innumerable forces at work in the selection of Tony Award winners, and artistic excellence is perhaps the least of them. The Tony Awards are first and foremost about the survival of Broadway as a commercial enterprise (a proposition that is becoming increasingly dicey as, for the first time in years, rising ticket prices failed to compensate for declining attendance). Following sheer survival comes self-interest, then revenge and *Schadenfreude*, and, finally, a dose of sentimentality (this is, after all, the theater).

The awards ceremony itself is a rare opportunity for the purveyors of our nation's least popular entertainment medium, live theater, to reach a national audience via its most popular, network television. How long this opportunity will be offered in these economically parlous times, and in the face of a 40 per cent decline in ratings over the last five years, is the question: artistic prestige, like international news, is fast becoming a luxury that network television can ill afford. The producers were given strict instructions not to run over their allotted two hours, as the CBS affiliates across the country made it clear that they would not countenance sacrificing precious minutes from their late-evening local-news broadcasts, and the advertising dollars gained therefrom, to artistic prestige emanating from New York.

In response, the producers announced that they were dropping the selections from the four straight plays nominated for best in their category. While it is true that these out-of-context dramatic scenes rarely work on TV, the public excuse smacks of ingenuousness, or worse. After all, the time was somehow found to run nine musical excerpts, of which five were unconnected to the four shows nominated for best musical.

As it turned out, the producers knew exactly what they were doing: the ratings rose for the first time in four years. The ratings would have been even higher had the show not run twenty minutes over, as the viewership dropped precipitously after 11 P.M. In other words, a goodly number of viewers were not actually sitting on the edge of their seats waiting to find out whether John Guare or Neil Simon would win the award for best play, but rather had tuned in to be entertained by the musical numbers. (The CBS affiliates—who, to their credit, carried the show to the bitter end—had also been right: it seems extremely likely that those viewers who abandoned the show at 11:00 sharp did so to tune in to their local news—on another channel.)

So there is a good reason for the emphasis on musicals at the Tony Awards. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly obvious that serious drama is a genre that is largely irrelevant to present-day Broadway, typically accounting for just 20 per cent of each week's box-office take. As an indication of just how endangered a species the straight play has become in the Broadway jungle, those two natural enemies, the League of American Theaters and Producers and the unions, actually managed to sit down and agree to concessions that would allow for the production of modestly budgeted plays in under-used Broadway theaters at reduced ticket prices.

As a commercial venture, the so-called Broadway Alliance has proved to be pretty much a bust. Indulgent reviews could not save either Steve Tesich's *Speed of Darkness*, a serious, and seriously flawed, old-fashioned family drama about the emotional fallout of the Vietnam War that featured some impressive acting, or Timberlake Wertenbaker's *Our Country's Good*, from the Royal Court in London, a clever, and sometimes too-clever-by-half, treatise on the civilizing influence of theater, as enacted by a group of transported Australian convicts who mount a production of Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*.

Our Country's Good actually managed to garner a Tony nomination for best play; it posted its closing notice the day after the awards were announced. *Shadowlands*, another British import, was also nominated, but William Nicholson's affecting heart-tugger about love and loss, based on the life of C. S. Lewis, had already closed long ago. The Tony voters did give the play a nod by awarding the best-actor prize to Nigel Hawthorne, who in his acceptance speech thanked the play's producers for sticking with the show through some tough times, including the Gulf War and the chief theater critic of the *New York Times*.

Not to be found among the nominees for best play was David Hirson's ambitious *La Bête*, a rare instance of a play created directly for Broadway (most prefer to try out first either off Broadway, at a regional theater, or in London). Daringly, and often ingeniously, written entirely in rhymed couplets, and given a brilliant physical production, *La Bête* had the chutzpah to take as its subject no less than the theater artist's attempt to maintain the standards of his art versus pandering to the masses—a sore subject for critics whose beat is the commercial theater. If there are plays that are critic-proof (see Neil Simon, below), then *La Bête* was critic-doomed.

The pundits seemed to think that the fight for best play came down to a contest between John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation* and Neil Simon's *Lost in Yonkers*, but this assessment was predicated mostly upon critics believing their own hype and spending too much time with like-minded friends.

Brilliantly directed by Jerry Zaks, and with a riveting performance from Stockard Channing, *Six Degrees*, based on the true story of a con man who insinuates himself into the lives of some wealthy and sophisticated New Yorkers by pretending to be the

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son of Sidney Poitier, is clever and chic and entertaining, but hardly the life-shattering experience that some professional viewers made it out to be. Mr. Zaks's contribution was recognized with the award for best direction, which in the absence of the award for best play is not a very nice thing to happen to a playwright.

The winner was—surprise—Mr. Simon's World War II–era story of two boys left by their widowered father in the care of his Teutonic martinet of a mother. A subplot—actually a whole other play—concerns the boys' mentally arrested 35-year-old aunt, who is desperately searching for love and escape from the emotional stranglehold of her mother. More consistently serious than Mr. Simon's previous plays, *Lost in Yonkers* nevertheless has enough of his trademark one-liners to satisfy the audiences who have made him the most successful playwright of this—and perhaps any—time.

It delivers everything Broadway audiences look for in a play—you laugh, you cry, you recognize yourself and your family up there on the stage. Furthermore, Mr. Simon accomplishes all this without condescension: he obviously believes strongly in his characters and in the veracity of their situations. I found it difficult to believe in either, particularly a German-Jewish grandmother, played by Irene Worth, who has nothing Jewish about her, and a feeble-minded daughter, played by Mercedes Ruehl, who suddenly, unaccountably, is able to stand up for herself and deliver a meticulously reasoned and articulated self-defense. Both are juicy roles and both actresses won the awards in their category—a seeming paradox explained by some sleight-of-hand gerrymandering that managed to whisk Miss Worth, despite her above-the-title billing, out of the crowded best-actress category and into the pushover featured-actress slot. Put it down to the magic of Broadway.

The good news as far as straight plays are concerned is that there were some worthwhile ones mounted in New York this season, but they occurred off Broadway and therefore do not exist in Tony Award land. The other good news is that the American musical is showing definite signs of life. More on both of these promising trends, and less cynicism, in this space next time. □

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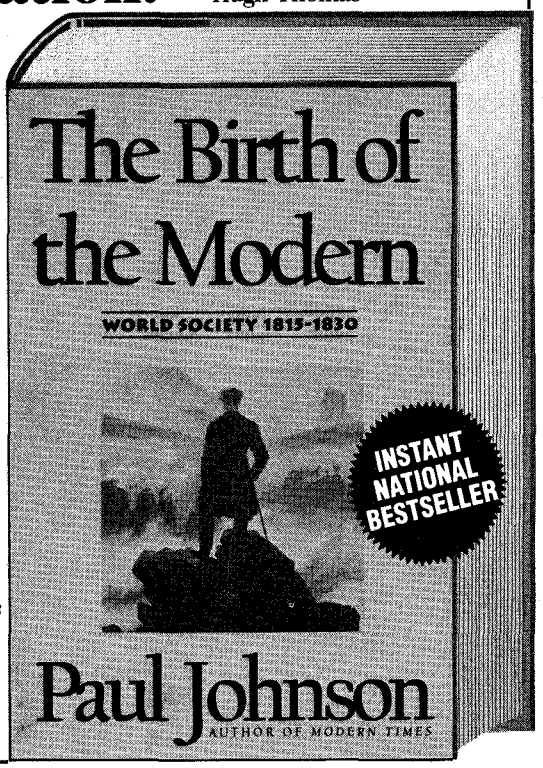

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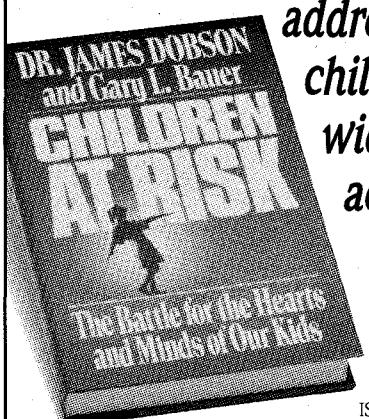

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Movie of the Moment

JOHN SIMON

Alan Nahigian

THERE IS almost always a Movie of the Moment, which sometimes, though far from often, proves a lasting achievement. Currently, that title goes uncontestedly to ***Thelma & Louise***, Ridley Scott's film from a first screenplay by Callie Khouri, a former pop-music video producer. It has been described as a combination road movie, (female) buddy picture, and crime-spree film, as if these were three separate genres, whereas, because of the customary overlapping, they are more like one and a half.

Louise (Susan Sarandon) is a waitress in an Arkansas eatery. She is mad at her traveling-musician boyfriend, Jimmy, who won't commit himself to her. Her good friend Thelma (Geena Davis) is married to Darryl, a domineering and patronizing narcissist, who treats her as a backward child—a treatment, it must be said, not entirely unearned. Louise, needing a change, proposes a weekend trip to the mountains in her 1966 Thunderbird convertible, and Thelma, though afraid to ask Darryl for permission, accepts after some hesitation anyway.

We now encounter the visual leitmotif: the two women side by side, with Louise driving, shot from every conceivable angle and then some. With the winds of freedom playing in their liberated tresses, the car topless and the journey aimless, their joy is bottomless. In a roadside honkytonk, however, their lives change irrevocably. A darkly handsome, soft-spoken but swaggering stranger in his sexist prime joins them uninvited, pays compliments to both, and soon gets the somewhat drunk Thelma to dance with him in complete, newly emancipated abandon. You'd think that a woman, even a quasi-runaway, would not trust a man who dances with a beer bottle in one hand poking his partner's shoulderblades, but Thelma does, and even follows him out into the parking lot for a breath of sobering air. Provocative as she is, she gets not air, but attempted rape.

Louise appears just in time to find Thelma tossed over the hood of a car, and the man on top of her. As it happens, Thelma brought her husband's handgun along on the trip; as it further happens, she put it in Louise's pocketbook for safekeeping. With the gun, Louise pries the man off Thelma, then gives him a well-deserved dressing down. As the women start to leave, the fellow becomes defiant and insulting; Louise turns around and plugs him. With one shot from some distance, she gets him right through the heart.

Let's take stock here. We've never been told that Louise is such a marksman and how she got that way. Was she shooting to kill, which seems excessive, or was it just luck, which seems unlikely? Nor were we shown why this tough, savvy, not-so-young waitress pals around with this immature, silly housewife who married foolishly at 18, and still doesn't seem much older in years or experience. The man has slapped Thelma around: from mouth to thigh, she is covered with bruises. There are no other witnesses, and the man, as a friendly waitress warned the women, has a bad record. So why not go to the police?

No. Louise decides to escape to Mexico. But, to the dismay of Thelma, who is studying the road map, her friend, because of something terrible she won't talk about that happened to her there, refuses to drive through Texas. They must, time-consumingly, circumnavigate it along unpoliced back- and dirt-roads. Why can't Louise just tell Thelma? Oh, she explains, Texas policemen would be beastly to women on the run after killing a male. Would they be any worse than the ones in Arizona or New Mexico?

The journey now proceeds along a route that makes no sense, not only navigationally but also geographically. There is no way in which one shown location could connect with the previous or succeeding one, and sometimes the same locales pop up at very different stages of the trip. Ridley Scott clearly disregards continuity or logic for the sake of visual effects. Antonioni similarly skewed the landscape of Sicily in *L'avventura*, but that was not a naturalistic film and could absorb arbitrariness. Here such aestheticizing rings false. Scott started in commercials on English television, and he and his British cinematographer, Adrian Biddle, go in for a studied gorgeousness more suited to Pampers and Doeskin commercials than to a realistic movie. A veritable Babel of filters has been tapped, and the images speak in color tongues that are intoxicating but, in a realistic setting, unsettling to the human eye. The very composition of the frames is often artier than the subject and situation can bear. This is not the objective correlative for women's liberation; it is more like transfiguration.

Then again, there is that favorite road-movie strategy, whereby our heroines keep running into the same guys over and over. One such is a handsome young con man, JD, who rather unconvincingly pretends to be a student and finally hitches a ride with the women to Oklahoma City. There he talks his way into Thelma's bed for a night, and promptly steals the money that Lou-

Mr. Simon, NR's film critic, is also theater critic for New York *magazine.*

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ise's repentant lover, Jimmy, personally delivered to Louise earlier. Thelma, idiotically entranced by JD's sexuality and his accounts of liquor-store holdups, left the money lying around and even invited JD to join them in Mexico someday. Now, suddenly smart and effectual, Thelma herself robs a liquor store by the JD method, and replaces the money. Meanwhile, JD, on his own, falls into the hands of Hal, the friendly Dostoyevskian policeman, who gently but doggedly pursues the women.

At Louise's urging, Thelma calls home, but it is immediately clear that Hal, the FBI man Max, and their wiretappers have moved in with Darryl. Still, Louise conducts numerous brief phone conversations with Hal, evading the tappers but enjoying the badinage. Who knows what might have happened if the women had not met up again with a male-chauvinist gasoline trucker, who each time they passed him made rude gestures and overtures. This time they decide to humiliate him, which is fine; but they also shoot the hell out of and blow up his truck, which (the Big Bang theory of liberation?) may be a bit too much. In any case, they are total outlaws now.

What was mostly comedy turns into drama and ends in what Unamuno would have called tragic joy. I don't think I am giving anything away here, since Scott and Miss Khouri clearly think they have created a work of art, and no one was ever turned off *Hamlet* by being told it ends badly. But what exactly is this work of art trying to say? Miss Khouri (married to another producer and writer, and thus no innocent, wide-eyed outsider) seems a trifle confused. In an interview with the *New York Times*, she first says that Thelma and Louise are "outlaws . . . never intended as role models, for God's sake." Their actions are criminal, and they duly pay for them. "I don't want anybody doing anything they saw in this movie," she says with perfect genderless syntax.

A tad further on, though, Miss Khouri says, "I also wanted, as a woman, to walk out of the theater not feeling dirty and worthless . . . like I had compromised the character of women. . . . So many times you go to the movies, and what woman up there would you want to be? None of them." Well, what woman up there in *Thelma*

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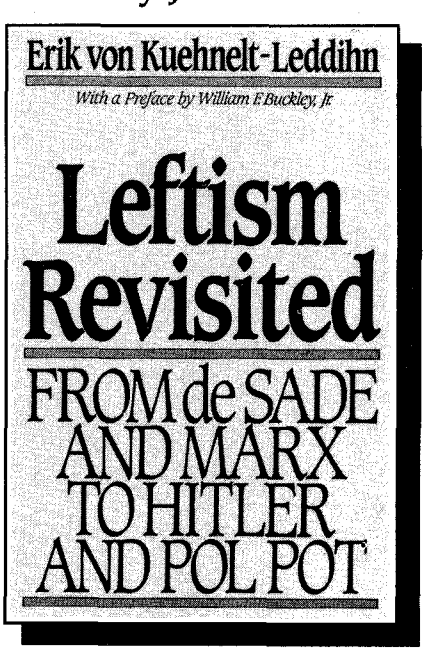
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& *Louise* would you want to be? There is that nice waitress (Lucinda Jenny, and good), on screen for three minutes; could she be a role model to leave women viewers feeling clean and worthy?

Another objection addressed by Miss Khouri is that all the men in the film are pigs—that she is male-bashing. There she has an out: as Hal, the good cop, Harvey Keitel is almost too sympathetic; and Jimmy, the errant lover, reforms, albeit too late; moreover, as played by Michael Madsen, he is such an Elvis clone as to be repellent even when reformed. But the others are truly scum. Darryl, the husband, especially as performed by Christopher McDonald, could give narcissism, sexism, even marriage a bad name. As the proto-rapist, Timothy Carhart invites instant castration; shooting is really too good for him. Brad Pitt, as the f----'em-and-pluck-'em JD (for juvenile delinquent?), overacts mightily and keeps displaying his near-nude body almost gloatingly. (Or does this tell us something about Ridley Scott?)

Then there is Max, the Fed, played by Stephen Tobolowsky (the ex-husband of the playwright Beth Henley), who manages to be as mean as he looks dumb—with a head like a vegetable (eggplant? turnip?) on which someone has painted a face. Finally, the highway policeman (Jason Beghe) who tries to arrest Louise is portrayed as another narcissist and uniform-happy fascist, coward, indeed a sissy. The cover of the press kit inadvertently lists a further principal, Marco St. John, who was evidently cut out of the movie. Was he too monstrous even for Miss Khouri? There seem to have been other extensive cuts: Louise and Hal appear to be intimates after their second phone conversation, intimating at least a couple of other excised chats in between.

But there is something Ridley Scott does have: a strong visual sense. The way a helicopter suddenly, scarily pops out of a canyon to block our runaways' path; the way a whole brigade of squad cars springs up before and behind them like Cadmus's dragon seed, and similarly self-destructs. Or the way he will fade back and forth between the two women in the T-Bird's front seat, until it feels as if there were only one person there, her face changing in a lazy rhythm from Louise's to Thelma's and back again. Does this suggest an emotional merger? Are these women, consciously or unconsciously, in love with each other? Is this perhaps not just a feminist but also a lesbian feminist movie? There are clever effects here, but, like those slow cross-fades, there is something too chic about them—as is this entire film, which treats the great outdoors with an interior decorator's sensibility.

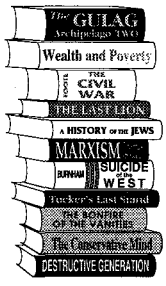
Undeniably, the performances of the leading ladies are powerful. Susan Sarandon, her face aged into a fine scrimshaw—a tracery of experience that deepens her womanliness—can switch from truculent waitress to blissful free-wheeler, from adolescent playing hooky to fugitive gambling her life at a happy or unhappy moment's notice. The tautness around her eyes and mouth is relieved by the fullness of her body; this is a woman used by life, bent on using what's left of it; she is both young and no longer young, both giving and hardened, and you feel with and for her.

And Geena Davis, with puppy fat still padding her jaw, an awakening greed for freedom dancing in her pupils, her rangy limbs loosening further with every new picaresque adventure, is all burgeoning sensuality triumphant over postcoital disappointments. She manages to smooth over the contradictions in the writing of her part, and almost brings off the too-sudden, unlikely transition from the early, unfocused Thelma to the later, cooly efficient one.

Yet for all the talent of the actresses, this overlong, underrealized, and overmanicured movie reflects the deludedness of its makers. They think that, by exultantly sacrificing their lives, Thelma and Louise somehow justify their anti-social anabasis. They think that feminist liberation, even if hurtling into destructive excess, is somehow glorious, which is surely the way benighted moviegoers are encouraged to view it. But it leaves a bad taste in the thinking mind—as did *Butch Cassidy*, *Easy Rider*, *Sugarland Express*, and countless others.

All these films, whether all-male, male-and-female, or all-female, are a glorification of, apology for, violence; they pander to piggery, masculine or feminine. The sole notable exception is Terrence Malick's *Badlands*, a true work of art, which managed to view a crime spree as both enchanted and horrific, and to connect it to the rootlessness and sleazy values of our time. □

AUDIO BOOKS



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FEDER

(Continued from page 37)

Shira Stern, a reform rabbi and daughter of violinist Isaac Stern, adroitly presented her abortion-on-demand advocacy as "a Jewish view of abortion," which is true in the sense that it reflects the opinions of some Jews. In the same sense, one might say that the gay group Dignity represents "a Catholic view" of homosexuality. In fact, her dogma is a clever corruption of Torah (in its broadest sense, the vast body of Jewish legislation). This may be "a Jewish view," but it is not the view of Judaism. Rabbi Stern cites Exodus 21:22-23, to validate her stand. Here, Mosaic law holds that if two men are quarreling and accidentally injure a pregnant woman so that she miscarries, her husband shall receive only monetary damages. Since the death penalty isn't invoked in such a case, Rabbi Stern and her colleagues reason, clearly Jewish tradition holds the fetus isn't human.

(Continues on page 53)

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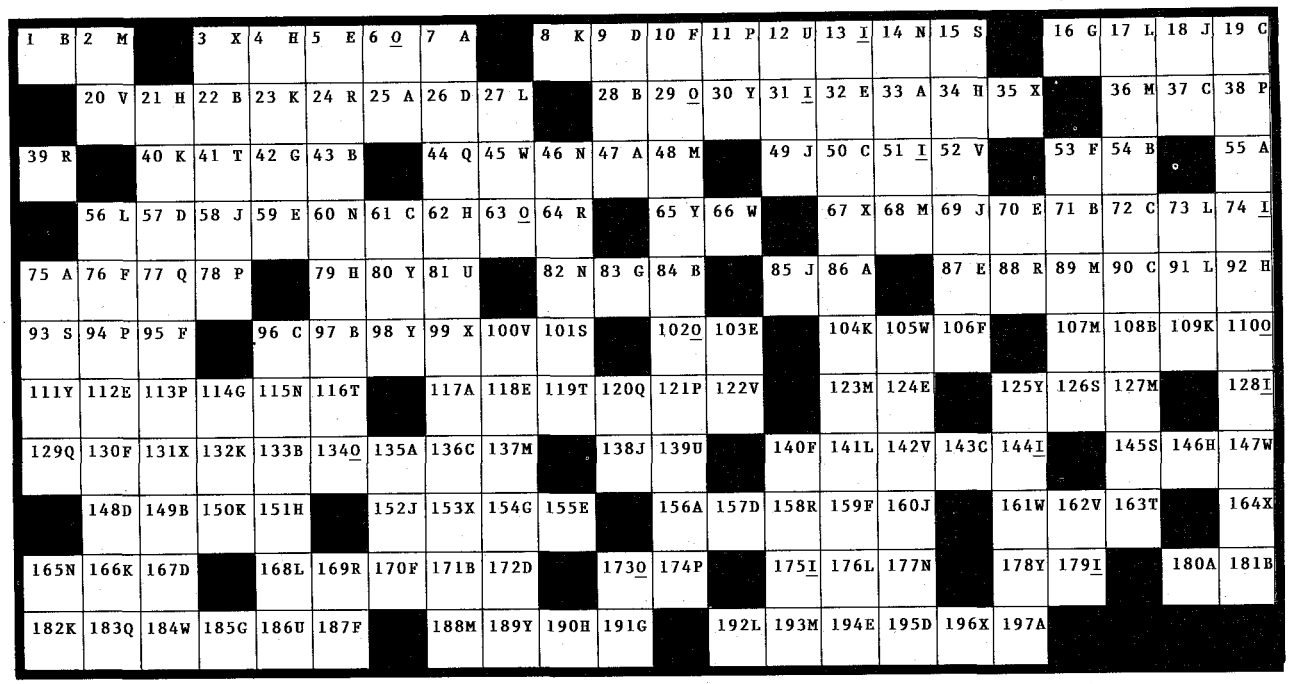
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Crafty schemes ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
117 55 25 180 47 197 75 156 33 86

___ ___
135 7

B. Out of place ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
97 43 108 71 28 133 149 54 171 1

___ ___ ___
181 84 22

C. Not easy ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
61 143 96 90 37 136 50 72 19

D. Where Bart Starr made his mark (2 words) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
195 57 157 167 9 148 26 172

E. Retroactive, as in legislation (3 words) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
5 70 87 118 59 155 124 194 112 32

___
103

F. Pitcher's best friend (2 words) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
187 170 53 76 159 106 130 10 140 95

G. Gasoline additive ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
83 16 191 154 185 42 114

H. When the king is lost ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
92 146 4 34 151 21 79 190 62

I. Showy ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
144 175 13 128 179 51 31 74

J. Crucial type of relations, directionally speaking (hyph.) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
69 18 85 152 138 58 160 49

K. Full of joy ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
109 132 182 104 166 23 150 8 40

L. Opposite of tenancy ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
176 141 27 91 192 168 17 73 56

M. City on the James (2 words) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
48 193 36 107 123 89 2 68 137 188

___
127

N. A siding is a small one ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
165 115 60 14 177 46 82

O. Turkish footstool ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
173 102 110 29 6 134 63

P. Negate ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
121 113 38 94 11 174 78

Q. Fruity name in computing ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
44 183 129 77 120

R. Like Bo Peep ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
158 24 169 64 39 88

S. Little song ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
101 126 145 93 15

T. When there, follow the locals' lead ___ ___ ___ ___
116 41 119 163

U. Supplemented (with "out") ___ ___ ___ ___
186 12 139 81

V. Greek goddess of wisdom ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
142 122 162 100 52 20

W. German poet & philosopher (1749–1832) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
45 66 147 161 105 184

X. Nonbelievers ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
196 164 153 131 67 3 99 35

Y. Relative of Def. X ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
80 111 125 189 30 178 65 98

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition.

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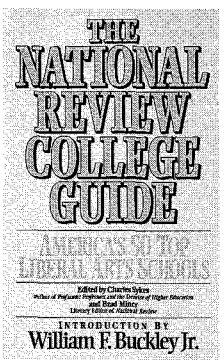

FEDER

(Continued from page 50)

True, Judaism does not assign the same status to the unborn child as to life after birth. Thus abortion is always permissible, indeed mandatory, when the mother's life is threatened.

But this is far from taking the feminist perspective, that the fetus is an appendage of the mother, merely a bit of tissue. Various Jewish authorities refer to the fetus as "germinating life" or "nascent life." Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, the outgoing chief rabbi of the United Kingdom, who has written widely on medical ethics, observes: "The destruction of an unborn child is a grave offense, though not murder."

The late Rabbi Seymour Siegel, a professor at Conservative Judaism's Jewish Theological Seminary, notes that the Talmud speaks of the fetus in its mother's womb joining in praise of the Almighty. The Zohar, the classic work of Jewish mysticism, calls the child *in utero* "the handiwork of the living God." Speaking in support of the right-to-life amendment, Siegel declared: "Traditional Judaism takes the view that the fetus possesses a human dimension: it is human life on the way."

This reverence for fetal life pervades Jewish law. The rabbis ruled that the Sabbath, which can be broken only to preserve human life, could be violated to save a fetus. The *kohanes*, or priestly class, were forbidden to touch a corpse. Contact with a miscarried fetus was considered within this category of ritual defilement. In Temple times, the capital trial of a pregnant woman was delayed until after she delivered.

Radical libertarianism, the notion that we may each do whatever we wish with our own person, is alien to normative Judaism. There is no right to suicide or self-mutilation, a prohibition encompassing so minor an act as tattooing. Even if the fetus were regarded as an appendage of the mother's body, which clearly it is not, a woman would not be allowed absolute freedom in this regard, any more than she has the right to amputate a healthy limb.

Jewish law isn't explicit on the subject of elective abortion for a simple reason: this practice was unknown in Jewish communities from Biblical times until the secular split in the nineteenth century. Jews, who were alone in the ancient world in rejecting human sacrifice and infanticide (a judgment the ancient Greeks considered barbaric), opposed the casual destruction of life at any stage.

Rabbinical rulings mainly concerned therapeutic abortion, the conditions under which a pregnancy could be terminated because of a risk to the mother's health. But the debate itself, the search for exceptions to the rule, proves that the practice in general was forbidden.

In the modern era, Orthodox Judaism alone has maintained scrupulous adherence to Jewish law, according to the sacred texts and classical commentaries. If one wants the definitive Jewish ruling on any religious question, one should inquire of those who keep the law in its entirety, the inheritors and guardians of a 3,500-year-old tradition, not of those who read the Torah the way Thurgood Marshall reads the Constitution.

Orthodoxy is unanimous and unambiguous in this regard. Rabbi Hirsch Ginsberg, Executive Director of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, informs us: "Traditional Judaism considers abortion tantamount to murder." Agudath Israel of America, the social-service/lobbying arm of Orthodoxy, filed an amicus brief in the *Webster* case in favor of overruling *Roe* v. *Wade*.

In response to the secular Jewish groups that lined up on the other side, Rabbi Hillel Klavan of Washington, D.C., charged: "For Jewish organizations to take a public stand that distorts authentic Jewish values and to misrepresent them as reflecting Jewish law is in the category of *Chilul Hashem* (the desecration of God's name)."

Judaism's concern for the unborn is a reflection of its historic commitment to life. The Holy One of Israel is often referred to as the God of Life, and his law the *Torah Chayim* (Torah of Life). Ours was the first faith to prohibit cruelty to animal life. Even the wanton destruction of trees transgresses Jewish law. How much greater must be our obligation toward an entity which, in the natural course, will become fully human in a matter of months?

Jewish abortion advocates cringe at the equation of slaughter of the unborn and the Holocaust. Yet Rabbi Jakobovits, himself a refugee from Nazi Germany, declares: "Jews may be particularly sensitive to any such discrimination [determining which life is worthy of preservation], having witnessed the horror of six million being shoved into the gas chambers because they were deemed inferior."

Memo to Bishop Daily: If you want "a Jewish view" on abortion, ask a secular Jew. If his mind isn't already made up, he'll probably consult with the rabbinical authorities of Temple Beth Quiche. But if you want *the* Jewish view, look to Judaism in its entirety, not selected Bible passages taken out of context. □

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How to Aid The Soviet Union

NEW YORK, MAY 31

Concerning the question of loans to the Soviet Union, a few observations:

1. Although the landmass over there is potentially rich, the stagnation is going to outlast the patience of any commercial lending institution, even if the administration of the economy were turned over to the gnomes of Zurich. Under the circumstances, the Soviet Union can only succeed in borrowing from mature lenders by pledging those very few assets it has that are liquid. Primarily, gold and oil. This means that serious loans to the country are going to have to be government loans, and this raises the question, What is it that the Soviet Union has that Western governments would be willing to give noncommercial loans to get?

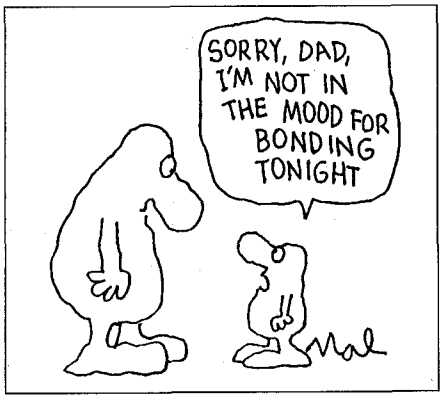
2. So far, it has offered the West primarily hot air. The pledges to change its ruinous command economy have proved almost uniformly empty. Apart from allowing McDonald's hamburgers and Pepsi-Colas into the Soviet Union (with complicated barter arrangements), the progress toward a market economy is exiguous. This is primarily so because of action, or rather inaction, by the government. But responsible also is a culture that resists profit-making, given that profit-making requires risk: the only risk Russians have been brought up on is that of saying the wrong thing and ending up in Gulag. The instinctive hostility to the whole idea of entrepreneurship is recognized widely by Soviet authorities. The cliché in Moscow is as follows: If Tomski sees neighboring farmer Johnski making enough money to, say, buy a car, he doesn't inquire into what his neighbor is doing that suddenly makes his farm so profitable, he wants to call the police to stop him from doing it. To overcome this psychological obstacle to progress—envy—requires a considerable national reorientation. It is wonderful to think that one day this may happen. But it is not plausibly a responsibility of rich governments to serve as godparents in the interval. Governments, we need to remind ourselves, don't have "money." They have the power to tax the money of their constituents.

3. Accordingly, the focus narrows. Prosperity in the Soviet Union is not a formal responsibility of Washington, Tokyo, or London/Paris. What is our responsibility is to see to it that the redundant nuclear resources of the Soviet Union are never harnessed for aggressive use. Sane international policy would look forward to a situation at the turn of the century in which the Soviet Union and the United States—yes, the United States also—reduced their nuclear reserves to a minimum deterrent force, supplemented by Star Wars, as fully developed as our joint technologies permitted.

We have, then, a concrete interest, measurable in dollars and cents, in paying the Soviet Union to destroy 90 per cent of its nuclear weapons. This is worth much cash that otherwise goes into elaborate and expensive deterrent and second-strike maintenance and development. We could effectively address the wealthy nations of the world to contribute very substantially to such a sum, as the demonstration is easily made that we all stand to benefit from the ensuing security. To use round figures, it would be entirely bearable to commit $100 billion a year in exchange for the progressive demilitarization of the Soviet Union.

4. It accomplishes nothing at all to say that such a reform would infuriate the Soviet military and much of the bureaucracy. The Soviet system is going to suffer in future months, indeed has suffered in the months that have just gone by. Economists are talking about the prospect of a loss in gross national product next year as high as 9 per cent. Given how small the surplus is, that retrenchment is frightening in its implications. The Soviet Union can probably keep its population physically alive, but not much more than that. We are in a position to say: Take it or leave it. The fear of handing an ultimatum to the Soviet Union traces to the fear that, under such duress, it might remobilize, take up its old bad habits, and give us yet another spell of brinkmanship. This is a technical possibility, but not one from which we have all that much to fear: that which deterred the Soviet Union in the past from apocalyptic challenges would certainly deter it in the future. No mad Qaddafi type is likely to seize power in the Soviet Union in order to lurch the country into a world war.

The West is ideally situated to call the tune. □



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The Medical Crisis

NEW YORK, JUNE 5

A learned friend who was a precocious anti-socialist at age approximately 13, and is himself an academic and a scientist, ruminates that opposition to socialized medicine is, really, something of a lost cause. In what ways, when you come down to it—he asks—could it be worse than what we now have?

Not an uninteresting question. The medical problem is as entangled as any ever confronted, precisely because it does not yield easily to free-market strictures. This is so for reasons not easily dealt with, foremost among them that we attach an importance to human life (after birth—before that, you are free to kill) properly incommensurate to the cost of maintaining that life. It is literally the case that hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, become impoverished by the expenditure of money to keep someone alive through months, sometimes years, of invalidism. The sentiment of the community is pretty well consolidated on the point that nobody should be permitted to die simply because he cannot afford a doctor.

Here then are the rough specifications of the problem:

1. Too many people are going unnecessarily to the doctor.

2. Not enough people have medical insurance.

3. Doctors are over-prescribing.

Now some free-market measures that would prove useful leap instantly to

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mind. In order to guard against the abuse of medical care by hypochondriacs, the free market is there with the classic remedy: increase the size of the deductible. If the first visit to the doctor every year were to cost the patient 100 per cent, the second 90 per cent, and so on, it would take 11 visits before the insurer (or the government) had to pay the entire cost of treatment. Such a reform —which is easily experimented with, raising, or lowering, the deductible as experience counsels—is overdue. The British health system was hugely helped by the Thatcher government's introduction of charges for prescriptions.

At the other end, much can be done by shielding the doctor from preposterous malpractice suits. An obstetrician in Florida needs to pay $30,000 per year for malpractice insurance. And the cost of insurance is minor compared to the cost of unnecessary medical measures taken by doctors who wish to have a documented record that they exhausted every medical means of probing the patient's problems. During this season, Congress is dallying with a limit to punitive damages in certain civil-rights cases. There is no reason not to extend congressional supervision of legal damages to include those payable in malpractice suits. We are talking about an estimated $25 billion in reduced costs.

But consider, now, the tough questions. The first of these is the doctor-millionaire. Obviously there cannot be a ceiling placed on a doctor's attentions. But just as obviously the doctor who regularly makes a million or more doing heart bypasses should be subjected to the discipline of the market. It is always a little unsavory to talk about competition when dealing with professionals, but if a third party is paying for a heart operation, the patient needs to be directed to a doctor who will perform for a smaller charge. In the classic model, if a profession regularly compensates at a very high relative rate, then more people will practice that profession, causing the price of the professional service to come down. Here pressure needs to be exerted by insurance companies and also by the government. This is happening, and indeed, in the case of Medicare, happening to the point of imposing penalties on many doctors who are asked to perform at levels of compensation fixed years ago and unrealistically indexed. But at the top levels, competition is insufficient.

And, of course, there is the problem of clerical overhead—over $100 billion per year, according to a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. More than enough to care for the thirty million who are uninsured. Why is the free market incompetent to cope with this problem? Why is the American can-do imagination failing to come up with a bureaucrat-eating device that would make life possible without enslavement to The Form? What would be the wording of an Emancipation Proclamation to save Americans from bondage to the questionnaire? Is government intervention at this point the only way to go?

More in due course. □

Watch-Happy

NEW YORK, JUNE 3

I happen to be watch-struck, are you? I don't mean that just as some people buy new cars every five minutes I am always buying a new watch. But I can't let my eyes pass by any advertisement for any watch—don't care what it is, I have to examine it. My neurosis (right word?) stems from a) a compulsive need to know exactly what the time is, and b) an unquenchable curiosity about the watch as status symbol.

On Sunday, June 2, the front section of one newspaper carried ads for forty watches. Page 2 led off with a Van Cleef & Arpels number, two wonderfully plain watches, one with a sweep second hand, the other with a miniature second hand. "Gentlemen's Quartz Leather-Strap Watches. On left with steel and 18 kt. gold, $1,500, and on right with 18 kt. gold, $4,950." So I wonder out loud: Is the gold in #2 worth $3,450? That's about ten ounces of gold, on the gold market. I wonder how much the watch weighs. The entire thing, I'd warrant, much less than ten ounces. What is the markup on gold, if it is used in a watch? One hundred per cent? Hah! I bet it's one thousand per cent.

The second ad is Mickey Mouse (and Minnie Mouse), and you wonder offhand how they can afford to advertise watches that go so cheaply. But you stare down at the price. You rub your eyes. If you wear glasses, you take them off and clean them. "A $5,750 Mickey." I do not believe it. Yes: "For innovators, watch collectors, and friends of Mickey. Completely handcrafted in Switzerland." Question: Why do we care if it is handcrafted? Don't we care only that it works, and should last a long time? Surely handcrafted can't be as exact as machine-crafted? Would you want a handcrafted typewriter? Would you want to go up in a handcrafted satellite? "Handpainted dial and hands . . . Swiss quartz accuracy to within seconds a year." I like that. It means: As accurate as a $45 Casio. Now hold your breath: "18K gold: Mickey $14,500. Minnie $12,500." I bet the gold in those watches is costing you about $6,000 an ounce. Well, you certainly need to be an innovator or a watch collector to buy one of those. I swear, if I ever see anybody wearing one, I will move to Sweden and become a Socialist.

If the above isn't enough of an anti-status symbol for you, the next ad, featuring a total of 34 different watches, has one number called "IWC, International Watch Company, Da Vinci. This unique timepiece shows signs of genius. Completely handmade in Switzerland, the automatic perpetual calendar moon-phase chronograph even shows the year for at least the next 209 years without resetting the watch." What do they mean, "at least" 209 years? Do the designers not know whether it will give you signals after the year 2200? This watch is available in a "Limited Edition. A masterpiece in 18K, $19,995." I love that 995. It would be vulgar to pay $20,000 for a watch.

What does it look like? It looks like, and has exactly as many functions as, something advertised by another merchandiser as "The New Swatch Chrono": "No question about it: we're introducing The World's First StopSwatch, the Swatch Chrono Collection 1991, the latest chronographs from Switzerland. Water and shock resistant with Swiss quartz accuracy and a one-year manufacturer's limited warranty. $80."

Okay, what should a satisfactory watch have? Ask me, because nobody since Monsieur Longines has paid more attention to the question. It must have two time-zones, so you can see quickly what time it is in New York when you are in California. It ought to have a stopwatch, which is handy for this-and-that. It should have a digital face in addition to analogue, because digital is much easier to read when you want exactly the right time, for instance, to flick on your television screen to the news or the space shot, or to jot down celestial sights. You should have something there that reminds you what day it is; handy. You can get all of that in a Casio, but the digital face is crude. The BMW people produced a gorgeous watch with all those features, unhappily now out of print: they remaindered for about $200. Leaving you with? An Omega Seamaster. The model with gold ribbing, which is handsome and inoffensive, goes for about $800. It will be 209 years before my next watch-report. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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OFF THE RECORD

Family Ties. Recently, Senator Fritz Hollings (D., S.C.) introduced a bill that would permit the seven regional telephone companies—the Baby Bells—to research, develop, and manufacture telecommunications equipment, a field now dominated by AT&T. In response, Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D., Ohio) offered a host of amendments that would either slow the Baby Bells' entry into the market or place more restrictions on whom they could deal with.

The plot thickens when it is recalled that last year Hyatt Legal Services announced an agreement with AT&T whereby the telecommunications giant would subsidize legal services for those of its employees who are members of the Communications Workers of America through Hyatt—which happens to be headed by Mr. Joel Hyatt, son-in-law to Senator Metzenbaum.

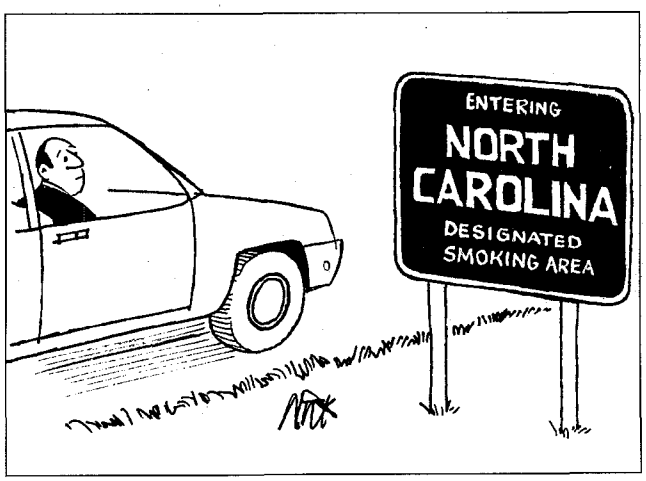
Vive la Différence! The appointment of Edith Cresson as France's new prime minister is bound to have bad implications for the U.S., says one confidential memo now circulating about town. Written by a former Reagan official who says he has known Mrs. Cresson since the early Eighties, it predicts that her appointment will delay for two years any agreement in the Uruguay Round: Mrs. Cresson, who comes from the Socialist Left, is said to be highly protectionist, anti-Japanese, and wary of political or economic liberalizations that might benefit neighboring Germany—which might ironically mean a boost to Franco-British relations.

Sects Change. In his 1984 book, *Heading Home*, Paul Tsongas wrote that a Washington Episcopal church had become his family's "spiritual haven." But the Democratic presidential candidate now says he's still a member "in good standing" at the Transfiguration of Our Savior Greek Orthodox church in Lowell, Massachusetts.

That spiritual flip-flopping irks Fr. Alexander Webster, head of the Ethics and Public Policy Center's Orthodox Studies Project, who writes in the *National Catholic Register* (June 9) that Mr. Tsongas is "appealing disingenuously to the Greek Orthodox community as one of its own," charging that the candidate "expects to capitalize on his Greek heritage by soliciting financial and moral support from the Greek American community."

Cato spoke with the pastor at Transfiguration, Fr. John Sarantos, who says that Mr. Tsongas is indeed "free to participate in the sacramental life" of the church, and that he even "worships occasionally" there, the last time on Easter. But Fr. Sarantos adds that Mr. Tsongas has not contributed financially to the parish "for years."

Uncivil Rights. President Bush appears to be enjoying his attack on the Democrats' civil-rights proposal; the more he bashes it as a "quotas bill" the more they try to water it down. The irony is that one of President Bush's leading foes on this issue is one of his own appointees: Arthur Fletcher, chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Mr. Fletcher, an old friend of Bush's and an outspoken supporter of the Kennedy Civil Rights Bill, has been traveling about America claiming that racism is "ingrained in our value system" and is so pervasive that it may dominate next year's presidential election. Perhaps. But why does it have to dominate a Civil Rights Commission appointed by a Republican President?



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Good Relations. Eyebrows were raised when the government of Nicaragua hired the law firm of Paul S. Reichler to represent it in Washington. Mr. Reichler, to be sure, is not without a certain expertise concerning Nicaragua: in the past he represented the government of Sandinista chief Danny Ortega. The word in diplomatic circles is that the hiring was done by President Chamorro's top aide and son-in-law, Antonio Lacayo, and that a startled Nicaraguan ambassador to the U.S., presented with this *fait accompli*, rushed back to Managua for an explanation.

Golden Gates. One of California's two '92 Senate races will feature a Republican primary face-off between liberal Congressman Tom Campbell and conservative media personality Bruce Herschensohn. But a senior Administration official tells Cato the White House is trying to coax popular conservative Congressman David Dreier to join the race—a move that would split the Right's vote and probably ensure a Campbell victory. Cato hears that Bush aides are acting at the behest of some well-known GOP political consultants who are miffed at not getting a cut of Herschensohn's campaign warchest.

The Party's Over. A few months back former Vietnamese ambassador Pham Huy Ty wrote in *NR*'s pages of the situation in his homeland, predicting that the Communist Party Congress scheduled for this spring would be the occasion of much wrangling and perhaps even a rebellion like the ones that swept Eastern Europe in 1989. Well, fearing as much, Party officials postponed the Congress; in the meantime several high-ranking members have defected. Latest word is that the Party will meet from June 24 to 27 in Hanoi. We'll keep you posted. —CATO

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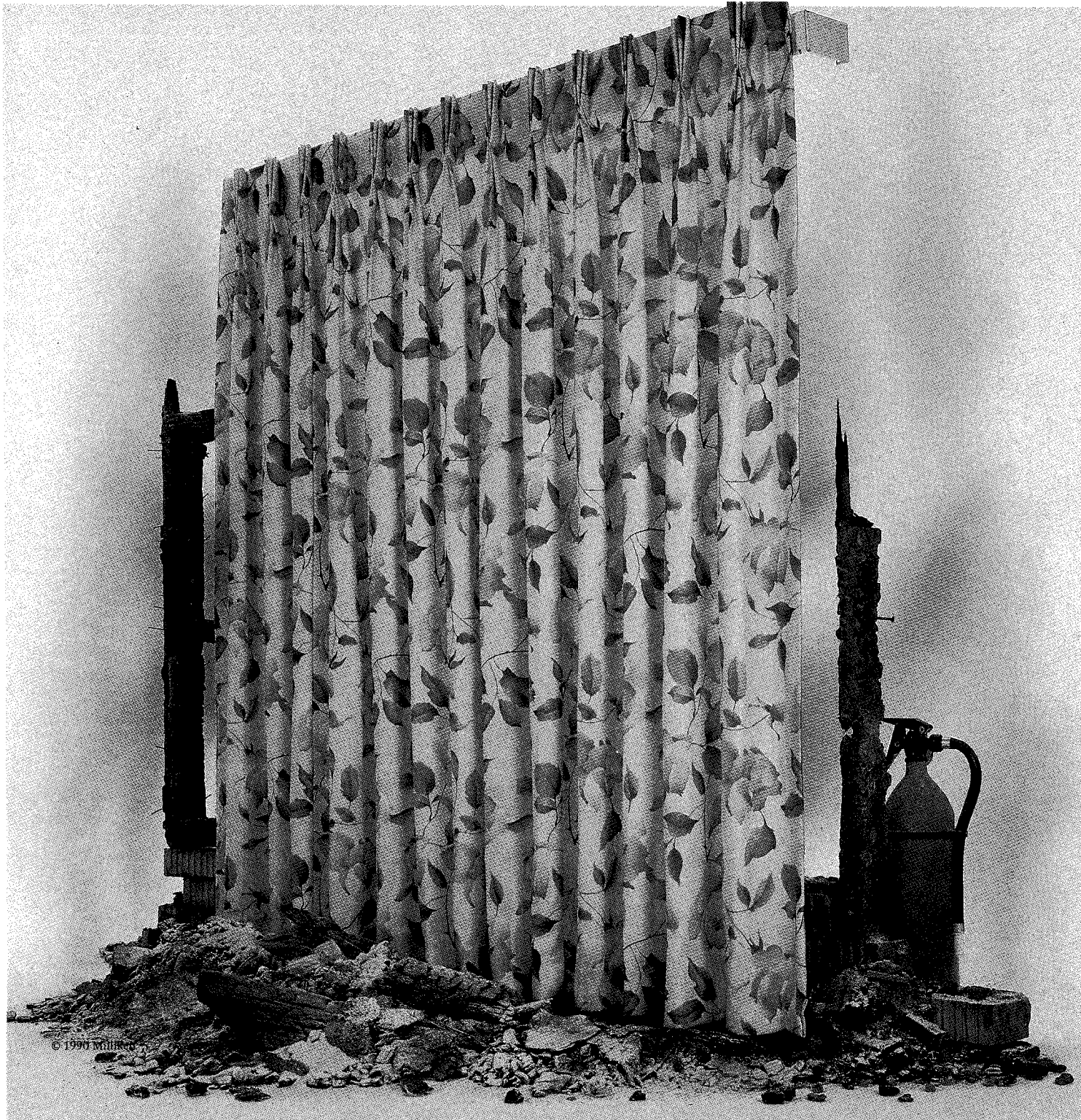

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